University of Alberta

# Quality in the Classroom: Perceptions of an Instructor Preparation Workshop

by

Shirley A. Carroll

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

in

Adult and Higher Education

Department of Educational Policy Studies

Edmonton, Alberta

Fall 1997

National Library of Canada
Acquisitions and Bibliographic Services
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada
Acquisitions et services bibliographiques
395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

*Your file Votre référence*

*Our file Notre référence*

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-22705-7

Canada

**University of Alberta**

## Library Release Form

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Author: | **Shirley A. Carroll** |
| Title of Thesis: | **Quality in the Classroom: Perceptions of an Instructor Preparation Workshop** |
| Degree: | **Master of Education** |
| Year this Degree Granted: | **1997** |

Permission is hereby granted to the University of Alberta Library to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly, or scientific research purposes only.

The author reserves all other publication and other rights in association with the copyright in the thesis, and except as hereinbefore provided, neither the thesis nor any substantial portion thereof may be printed or otherwise reproduced in any material form whatever without the author's prior written permission.

816 - 113B Street
Edmonton,
Alberta, Canada T6J 6W5

October 2, 1997

University of Alberta

## Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled **Quality in the Classroom: Perceptions of an Instructor Preparation Workshop** submitted by **Shirley A. Carroll** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Master of Education** in **Adult and Higher Education.**

A K Deane

Professor Art Deane

D. Collett

Dr. David Collett

Peter Wright

Dr. Peter W. Wright

September 30, 1997

## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my mother Annie M. Power whose legacy of enduring love, support, and encouragement has enabled me to realize this goal; and to my three daughters Erin, Natalie, and Andrea, whose lives I hope to touch in a similar way.

# ABSTRACT

College and technical institute instructors in Alberta are required to engage in a professional preparation activity, often in the form of a workshop, before they enter the classroom for their initial teaching experience. For many newly appointed instructors who have come from various professional, technical, and trades backgrounds, this workshop is the first exposure they have had to the principles and practices of adult education.

This study explored the perceptions of faculty, administrators, and workshop facilitators regarding the effectiveness of one such three-week workshop at a technical institute in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Data for this qualitative research was gathered by means of structured open-ended interviews conducted with 17 instructors, 2 administrators, and 2 workshop facilitators. Carefully crafted questions focusing on the critical instructional roles of lesson preparation and delivery, classroom management, student evaluation, and interpersonal communication elicited opinions and insights about instructor abilities to perform effectively in these key areas.

All faculty members indicated that the workshop was effective in preparing them for the lesson preparation and delivery component of their instructional role; although they observed that curriculum and workload requirements make it impossible to continually utilize the preparation and delivery method espoused by the workshop. Training in evaluation of student performance was considered by workshop participants to be weak; and the component of the in-service dealing with teambuilding was perceived by respondents from trades programs as being largely ineffective.

All faculty expressed an interest in participating in additional professional development activities. Short two-or three-day workshops and seminars are the preferred

mode, with classroom assessment techniques, test-writing, and classroom management being identified as topics where there is a need for further growth.

All respondents observed that the diversity of programming at the institute makes training for a specific content area difficult to implement; however, workshop coordinators are convinced that their current strategy of providing a process for instructors to follow when developing and delivering lesson plans is a solid approach to addressing the primary need of instructors—to impart their skills and knowledge to their students.

The findings of this study should be significant to professional development planners both at the institute where the study was performed and at other post-secondary schools. Allocation of resources and on-going support by administrators are deemed to be essential for the success of faculty development programs.

# Acknowledgements

There are many people to thank for their contributions and assistance to this study. Professor Art Deane, my supervisor, was supportive, encouraging, patient, and always available (even on vacation). He also knew exactly what to say to steer me in the right direction when I was tending to wander around in the wilderness of research.

My committee members, Dr. Dave Collett and Dr. Peter Wright, provided valuable insights and helpful suggestions.

The faculty at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology who participated in the research were so willing and pleasant to work with; Bill Isley and Dave Hoy from Organizational Development Services provided valuable information and were so supportive of the study; and my colleagues at Westwood took a personal interest in what I was doing and made me feel that they cared—special thanks to Linda, Lauralee, and Kathy for regularly asking, "How's it going?"

My family have been totally with me throughout these years of study and work. Wayne has covered every base on the homefront (and beyond) so that I could pursue this goal; and my daughters are now fully conversant with the requirements of completing a master's degree because of their vicarious involvement with my program. (I hope it doesn't put them off acquiring one of their own!). Finally, my sister Irene who has also embarked on the process of collecting degrees, has taken over where my mother left off by demonstrating her love, support, and interest in what I was working to achieve—thanks for not letting the miles between us make a difference!

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


| *Chapter* | *Page* |
|---|---|
| ***CHAPTER ONE - BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY*** | 1 |
| Introduction | 1 |
| Adult Education | 1 |
| Purpose of the Study and Research Questions | 5 |
| Definition of Terms | 6 |
| Significance of the Study | 6 |
| Delimitations | 8 |
| Limitations | 8 |
| Assumptions | 9 |
| Chapter Summary and Organization of Thesis | 9 |
| ***CHAPTER TWO - REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE*** | 11 |
| Introduction | 11 |
| Total Quality Management - A Brief History | 13 |
| Total Quality Management and Higher Education | 15 |
| Total Quality Management and Teaching Methods | 19 |
| Microteaching - A Valuable Pre-Service Experience | 24 |
| Enculturation of New Faculty | 26 |
| Evaluation of Instruction | 28 |
| Summary | 32 |

*CHAPTER THREE - METHODOLOGY* ..... 33

Gaining Access to the Institution ..... 34

Instruments and Techniques ..... 34

Population and Sample ..... 35

Interview Guide ..... 36

Data Collection (Interviews) ..... 38

Ethical Issues and Concerns ..... 39

Summary... ..... 41

*CHAPTER FOUR - FINDINGS OF THE STUDY* ..... 42

Introduction ..... 42

Demographic Data ..... 44

Interview Findings ..... 49

Interviews with Instructors ..... 49

Course Development and Delivery ..... 50

Classroom/Learning Environment ..... 55

General Comments and Observations ..... 58

Interviews with Administrators ..... 70

Perceptions and Opinions of the Effectiveness of BMI ..... 71

Interview with Workshop Facilitator ..... 76

Perceptions and Opinions of the Effectiveness of BMI ..... 76

Interview with Workshop Coordinator ..... 81

Perceptions and Opinions of the Effectiveness of BMI ..... 82

Summary . . . . . 88

*CHAPTER FIVE - CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS* . . . . . 90

Introduction . . . . . 90

Course Planning and Development: Sub-question #1 . . . . . 90

Conclusion . . . . . 90

Summary of Findings . . . . . 91

Implications . . . . . 92

Lesson Development and Delivery: Sub-questions #2 and #3 . . . . . 93

Conclusion (Sub-question #2) . . . . . 93

Summary of Findings . . . . . 93

Conclusion (Sub-question #3) . . . . . 94

Summary of Findings . . . . . 94

Implications . . . . . 96

Classroom/Learning Environment: Sub-question #4 . . . . . 97

Conclusion (Sub-question #4) . . . . . 97

Summary of Findings . . . . . 97

Implications . . . . . 99

Administrators' Perceptions of BMI Effectiveness: Sub-question #5 . . . . . 99

Conclusion (Sub-question #5) . . . . . 99

Summary of Findings . . . . . 100

Implications . . . . . 100

Recommendations . . . . . 101

Recommendations for Further Research ..... 105

Concluding Comments ..... 106

Bibliography ..... 107

Appendix A: Permission to Conduct Research at Participating Institute ..... 112

Appendix B: Information and Consent Forms—Participants in Research ..... 114

Appendix C: "Becoming a Master Instructor"Interview Guide for Instructors ... 118

Appendix D: "Becoming a Master Instructor" Interview Guide for Administrators (Program Head) ..... 122

Appendix E: "Becoming a Master Instructor" Interview Guide for Workshop Facilitator ..... 125

Appendix F: "Becoming a Master Instructor" Interview Guide for Workshop Coordinator ..... 128

# LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 - Demographic Characteristics of Participating Instructors. . . . . 44

Table 2 - Demographic Characteristics of Faculty at Participating Institute . . . . . 44

Table 3 - Demographic Characteristics of Other Interview Respondents . . . . . 48

# CHAPTER I

# BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

## Introduction

Educational research is today, as it has been for at least the past two decades, vigorously pursued, carefully orchestrated, and repeatedly renewed. There is a certainty of continued and growing interest in educational research because the number of important questions relating to the variety of factors that affect student behaviour and learning never seems to decline. Studies such as those conducted by Berliner (1984) and Bloom (1984) have set the stage for teaching to be considered a process of informed decision making—decisions about not only the "basic" instructional tasks of planning, delivery, and evaluation—but also about the equally important areas of student retention and motivation, classroom climate, and mentoring. Careful, systematic, and patient investigation into the broad field of inquiry that is education seeks to find reliable answers to important questions, to discover the best ways of doing things, and to establish principles that can be followed with confidence. This is educational research, and it has helped improve virtually every aspect of education.

## Adult Education

Although adult education has a rich history of practice dating from as early as the 1920's (Garrison, 1994), research into the educational needs and preferences of adults is

relatively young, having been systematically pursued for only about 30 years. Moreover, Garrison (1994) observes that "adult education in Canada does not have a critical mass of researchers in any particular area of study and, therefore, the field is largely dependent upon creative individuals working in relative isolation" (p.11). The scene is no better in the United States where Long (1992) notes that "while hundreds of research reports are being published annually...too few of these reports add to our theoretical understanding of adult education phenomena or to adult education practice" (p.67). Conceding that the development of research in the field of adult education has contributed to growth of the knowledge base in, among other phases, both "theory building and definition of research territory" (p.4), Garrison nevertheless believes that "increased numbers of researchers are needed to conduct lines of inquiry at macro and micro levels as well as in terms of applied and basic research goals" (p.11). What is needed most, state Plecas and Sork (1986) is that "the primary phenomenon under study would be organized learning, with the goal of the discipline [field?] being to develop a body of disciplined knowledge relating to how learning can best be facilitated given various adult learner populations and various social and political conditions" (pp.58-59).

One of the processes that is crucial to adult education is learning management. The four phases of learning management: design of the learning process, delivery, feedback, and revision of the learning process (Spaans, 1994) require development of the skills, attitudes, approaches and methodologies of people who teach adults. Westmeyer (1988) observes that most adult educators are well informed in the field of their teaching—chemists know chemistry, teachers of accounting have probably been

accountants, and so on—but they have not themselves been trained to be teachers. Dashcavich (1988) notes that "Quite often the needs of instructors are expressed in terms of 'having the ability to....,' and the training that is required should ensure that the instructors attain various skill or knowledge-oriented abilities (p.26). Besides university preparation for instructors, several other formats are used to meet their professional development needs. Workshops, seminars, retreats, conferences, group discussions, peer group demonstrations, and short courses are popular methods of preparation and training. As well, the latest technology including computers, video-tapes, video-discs, and the Internet are used to meet specific training needs of adult educators. Some post-secondary institutions have their own staff development programs which provide inservice activities for staff members as well as orientation sessions for newly appointed instructors. Konrad (1973), in a study of staff development practices in thirty-one colleges in western Canada, noted that the objectives for inservice training were related to the improvement of instructing and learning, and included issues such as interpersonal relationships, curriculum development, instructional methodologies, and evaluation procedures.

The Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) is a public, post-secondary non-university institution whose resources are dedicated to offering quality career education in support of Alberta's economic development. One of 26 institutions in Alberta's post-secondary system, NAIT's capacities are focused upon "wealth-generating occupations" (notably engineering and science-based technologies, trades, and some business sectors) which are directly reflected in productivity, competitiveness, and quality of life. The primary activity of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology is to offer a

wide array of career programming with the dual objectives of (1) helping students fulfill their personal, social, and vocational aspirations, and (2) meeting the skilled workforce requirements of business and industry. Instructors within full-time and apprenticeship programs are required to be specialists in their particular field with high levels of competence, depth of knowledge, and broad experience in applying their skills. The five primary activities relating to their duties are: (1) instruction, (2) course/program development, (3) student support, (4) instructional support, and (5) other support duties inclusive of technical, andragogical, and interpersonal activities as assigned by the Program Head and completed in cooperation with other staff both instructional and non-instructional.

NAIT requires that newly appointed instructors participate in a three-week "Becoming a Master Instructor" (BMI) workshop that is designed to guide, assist, motivate, and support quality teaching in the diverse instructional settings encompassed within the institute's 70 program offerings. This instructor-preparation activity is intended to train instructors in the critical areas of course content development, lesson planning, presentation of material, and classroom management. A method of presentation called "ROPES ( Review, Overview, Presentation, Exercise, Summary) adapted from the work of Robert R. Carkhuff (1981) is taught, and instructors are given an opportunity to practice the ROPES model through microteaching—presenting to a small group of six or seven peers four different lessons related to their specific skill area. Interpersonal communication as it relates to instructor-student interactions focusing on active listening and giving and receiving constructive feedback and constructive criticism are also

components of the workshop. The workshop format, according to Cranton (1996) is said to be the "most common professional development activity" (p.32). The framework "...focus[es] on techniques or strategies...include[s] experiential or hands-on learning... and the only evaluation of their effectiveness [is] participant satisfaction ratings" (p.32).

## Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

This study will address the following research question: To what extent do NAIT instructors who participate in the three-week "Becoming a Master Instructor" (BMI) workshop perceive that they are effectively prepared for their teaching role? The following sub-questions will guide the research:

1. How do instructors perceive their course development abilities? Do they feel competent to develop a course in their specialty area within prescribed guidelines?

2. How do instructors perceive their lesson planning abilities? Do they feel competent to prepare lesson plans that define the major steps, sub-steps, and support knowledge necessary to enable students to reach the instructional objectives of the course?

3. How do instructors perceive their abilities to prepare and deliver an effective presentation following the "ROPES" (Review, Overview, Presentation, Exercise, Summary) method?

4. How do instructors perceive their interpersonal abilities when dealing with students? Do they feel competent to engage in active listening skills and to give and receive constructive feedback and constructive criticism in an instructional setting?

5. How do administrators at the Program Head level, as well as the workshop coordinator and facilitator perceive that instructors' abilities in course development, lesson planning and delivery, and interpersonal communication are influenced by participating in the BMI workshop?

## Definition of Terms

***ROPES*** A method of teaching that consists of five points: **Review** (know your audience); **Overview** (develop and communicate your objective); **Presentation** (deliver your presentation by telling, showing, and having the learners do something); **Exercise** (learners practice and exercise the new skill); and **Summary** (learners complete a quiz or assignment and get immediate feedback).

**Perception** A person's response to a stimulus. It includes the person's interpretation of the meaning of the stimulus in light of their own experiences. Differences in interpretation of the intention, meaning, and impact of an event can cause wide variances in perception of that event by individuals.

## Significance of the Study

A mission statement that reads:

***The Northern Alberta Institute of Technology is dedicated to offering quality career education that fulfills the goals and expectations of students while serving the needs of the economy,***

coupled with institute goals that include:

- ***excellence in service to students***
- ***responsiveness to the needs of employers***
- ***accountability to the Province and its citizens***
- ***development and well being of employees***
- ***enhancement of quality of life in the community***

and institute values that express the following ideals:

- ***lifelong learning and sharing of knowledge***
- ***pride in work and the pursuit of excellence***
- ***trust, fairness, openness, and benevolence in the learning and working environment***
- ***respect for the individual in all human relations***
- ***efficiency in the use of resources***

have undoubtedly led to the establishment and implementation of an instructor-preparation program at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. Moreover NAIT has recently formally embraced the concepts, tools, and management framework of Continuous Quality Improvement/Total Quality Management (CQI/TQM), and evidence of implementation of quality processes exists in many of the institute's peripheral nonacademic functions. Finding appropriate ways of incorporating CQI into the classroom is a challenge that NAIT, like so many educational institutions of its ilk, is currently attempting to address.

> Nowhere are the positive outcomes of TQM more needed than in the instructional delivery system—that is TQM in the classroom. But transferring the TQM principles, concepts, and experience from industry to the classroom is not quite so straightforward and will require dramatic changes in the instructional process; the roles of students, faculty, and nonfaculty personnel; and the evaluation processes (Helms & Key, 1994, p.97).

Adoption of CQI principles and procedures at NAIT has led to the revision of the former instructor-preparation workshop to reflect a project management approach and increased emphasis on communicating and facilitating in a team environment. Since 1995, the instructor training/orientation activity (which is a condition of employment for all new teaching staff) has been delivered with increased efficiency and consistency (Isley, 1995, p.19). This study is significant because it will provide current data about faculty perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the present BMI workshop as a tool to prepare newly appointed instructors, not only to facilitate learning but also to perform as effective team members. Individual instructors involved in the study will have an opportunity to reflect upon their own progress in becoming skilled in the application of the instructional strategies presented in the BMI workshop; they will also have an opportunity to offer

suggestions for improvements to future workshops. In addition, individual instructors will be able to identify the personal strengths and weaknesses that impact their role as an instructor. The data gathered through this study will be useful for decision-making around continued training of faculty in andragogical theory and techniques. Institute administrators and workshop leaders/facilitators will also provide valuable data regarding their perceptions of the effectiveness of BMI. Comparison of these perspectives will serve to validate information and should contribute to the overall credibility of the research findings.

## Delimitations

A limited number of instructors at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology who have completed BMI training within the past two years and are presently in full-time instructional positions will be solicited by the researcher to participate in this study. Since the greatest number of programs offered at NAIT are in engineering, science-based technologies, and trades, this study will focus on instructors in those areas.

## Limitations

This study will be limited by the following factors:

1. The ability of the researcher to manage potential attrition of participants in the study.
2. The ability of participants to effectively relate through a structured interview their opinions and perceptions about the BMI workshop.

3. The amount of time the participants and the researcher will have to devote to this study.

4. The potential for bias on the part of the researcher who is in an administrative position at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology.

## Assumptions

The design and execution of this study is based on a number of assumptions. Common assumptions relating to data gathered by means of interviewing were made: for example; Patton (1990) cautions that perceptions and perspectives are subject to distortion due to personal bias, anger, anxiety, politics, and simple lack of awareness. Interview data can also be affected by the interviewees' ability to recall details, by reactivity to the interviewer, and by self-serving responses. It was also assumed that respondents would provide honest, forthright answers and would portray a positive attitude toward the study. Two major assumptions are as follows:

1. Adult education instructors have specific needs relating to preparation for their roles as instructors.

2. Adult education instructors are capable of analyzing and examining the strengths and deficiencies of the instructor-preparation workshop (BMI).

## Chapter Summary and Organization of the Thesis

This chapter has provided background for the research and introduced the research problem. It has identified limitations, delimitations, definitions, and assumptions as well as outlining the significance of the study.

Chapter Two will present a review of literature related to this study. Chapter Three will describe the research method employed. Chapter Four reports on the findings of the research; and Chapter Five contains conclusions, implications, and recommendations as well as identifying probable areas for further study.

# Chapter II

# REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

## Introduction

The review of the literature presented in this chapter will examine scholarly observations pertaining to the best knowledge, skills, and practices of adult education instructors in educational institutions that are employing Total Quality Management (TQM) or Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) techniques. For the past decade, the post-secondary system has been sorely vexed by the cry of government to be *accountable*, by the call of administrators to be *effective*, and by the resistance of faculty to what they consider *assessment*. From their inception, community colleges and technical institutes have been results-oriented. They have measured their progress in terms of student success and community impact, regularly reporting placement data, retention rates, and economic thrust. A joint commission on accountability appointed by three major national educational associations in the United States determined that accountability reporting is the "right thing to do" (Hudgins, 1996, p.2). The question is no longer, "Should we be accountable?" but "How shall we demonstrate accountability?" A study conducted for the American Council on Education to evaluate the public perception of higher education found that "(1) the general public believes the purpose of a college education is to acquire a credential for employment, and (2) community and business leaders believe that the principal role of colleges and universities is to prepare a highly educated workforce"

(Hudgins, 1996, p.2). Both perceptions match the mission of community colleges and technical institutes in Canada as well as in the United States. As Hudgins (1996) points out, "It is no longer acceptable for an educational institution to say it does not know or cannot measure the outcomes of education"(p.2). Hudgins believes that "the ultimate test of institutional effectiveness is assessing what and how much our students are learning. What value do we add to students from their point of entry until they exit our college?" (p.3) He suggests that assessing and improving effectiveness at the classroom level is the way to improve outcomes. In the province of Alberta, recent legislation has incorporated outcomes data into funding formulas and identified a strong accountability mandate for post-secondary education.

The purpose of this research is to assess perceptions of newly appointed instructors regarding their level of preparation for their teaching role. All respondents in this study have participated in a three-week instructor-preparation workshop where the focus has been on course development, lesson preparation and delivery, and interpersonal communication with students. The cooperating institute at which this study was conducted adheres to the TQM/CQI management philosophy, and the principles of TQM/CQI which undergird its approach to faculty development provide the framework for the inservice training program studied here.

The literature presented in this chapter has been divided into six major sections. The first twosections provide a brief overview of TQM/CQI and summarize its application to higher education. The third section examines how TQM/CQI can be and is being operationalized to improve teaching methods. The fourth section considers writings and

research around microteaching and its value to beginning teachers; the fifth section looks at the process of enculturating new faculty in higher education. The sixth section reviews instructional evaluation, including student ratings of instruction, as a tool for improving the quality of instruction. The chapter concludes with a brief summary.

## Total Quality Management—A Brief History

Total Quality Management (TQM), or Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) as the movement is also known, is an approach to management that reflects a philosophy and set of concepts and methods aimed at continually improving the product or service provided to customers. From the days when Frederick Taylor's scientific management theory was proposed as a means of maximizing productivity and output, industry leaders have searched for the best practices that lead to superior performance. Taylor's approach floundered because of his inattention to the "human factor," and he discontinued his experiments when he discovered that "human motivation, not just engineered improvements, could alone increase output" (Lewis and Smith, 1994, p.44).

W. Edwards Deming, a statistician with a Ph.D. in physics, is the man whose name is most readily linked with the total quality movement. Deming formed many of his theories out of rebellion against the scientific management concepts of Taylor, and he refined them during World War II while he and colleague Joseph Juran were teaching industries how to use statistical methods to improve the quality of military production. When the war ended, Deming was invited by the Japanese to come and teach them about

his methods. In 1950, at a dinner meeting with 45 of Japan's leading industrialists, Deming gave the following advice: "Don't just make it and try to sell it. Redesign it and then again bring the process under control. The cycle goes on and on continuously, with quality ever-increasing" (Mann, 1987). Deming promised the Japanese that within five years they would have people demanding their products—he was wrong; within four years Japan had captured large shares of some markets, and to this day that country is renowned for its production of superior quality goods.

It wasn't until the 1970's that North America felt the need to respond to the "Japanese Invasion" of well-made products, and at that time Deming returned and began teaching his "Fourteen Points." Deming's concepts have been refined and enhanced by contemporary quality gurus such as Philip Crosby whose "14 Steps to Quality Improvement" are a vital part of the continuous quality improvement/total quality management framework.

**Crosby's 14 Steps to Quality Improvement**

1. Make it clear that management is committed to quality.
2. Form quality improvement teams with representatives from each department.
3. Determine where current and potential quality problems lie.
4. Evaluate the cost of quality and explain its use as a management tool.
5. Raise the quality awareness and personal concern of all employees.
6. Take actions to correct problems identified through previous steps.
7. Establish a committee for the zero-defects program.
8. Train supervisors to actively carry out their part of the quality improvement program.
9. Hold a "zero-defects day" to let all employees realize that there has been a change.
10. Encourage individuals to establish improvement goals for themselves and their groups.
11. Encourage employees to communicate to management the obstacles they face in attaining their improvement goals.
12. Recognize and appreciate those who participate.
13. Establish quality councils to communicate on a regular basis.
14. Do it all over again to emphasize that the quality improvement program never ends.

In the 1990's, Deming's philosophy of quality improvement, which emphasizes the processes by which results are produced rather than the end results, has survived the difficulties of acceptance, understanding, and implementation that have plagued its application to business practice. Initially, business leaders adopted the trappings of quality programs: quality circles, suggestion boxes, and open-door policies—they were attempting to graft pieces of the process on to the existing structures—but these changes had little impact on quality. Today, many businesses wholeheartedly embrace quality management; and this has resulted in massive changes in their methods of operation. It has also "enhanced quality significantly, and increased productivity and profitability" (Bailey & Bennett, 1996, p.77).

## Total Quality Management and Higher Education

***Quality is not an act. It is a habit. - Aristotle***

Defining quality is not easy—even for *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* which lists seven different possibilities. Quality, we realize, is one of those elusive, abstract nouns that ends up being defined by its characteristics; it is a subjective property, difficult to measure. When you add education, and more specifically higher education, to the subject under scrutiny, it becomes apparent that the definition of quality in education includes a litany of descriptions of "aspects of university or college life, faculty experience and expertise, available facilities, campus amenities, and other factors that, when taken together, constitute a 'quality education.'" (Smith & Baxter, 1995, p.38). Gilmore (1991)

finds that "although a number of definitions of institutional quality have been advanced, the one with arguably the most credence holds that the highest quality institutions are those that effect the greatest positive intellectual and developmental change in their students, and that have the strongest impact on post-graduation student outcomes" (Gilmore, 1991, p.xi). In a publication from Midlands Technical College, South Carolina, James L. Hudgins, president of the college, points out that the Council on Post-Secondary Accreditation makes a statement that helps to define quality education: "The quality of an educational process is related to (1) the appropriateness of its objectives; (2) the effectiveness of the use of resources in pursuing these objectives; and (3) the degree to which these objectives are achieved. Without a clear statement of what education is expected to provide, it is not possible to determine how good it is." Faculty and curriculum have been cited as the key variables in quality education. Hard-working instructors, dedicated to student success by delivering a curriculum that is practical, transferable, and job-oriented are deemed to be critical measures of whether quality education exists.

Total quality management as a managerial style and philosophy has received a great deal of praise from nonacademic sources. There is no shortage of accounts of successful TQM implementation in industry resulting in improved products, service, and customer satisfaction. Recently academia has incorporated TQM principles and practices into many of its nonacademic functional units. Significant improvement in the bureaucratic, administrative details of enrollment and financial aid as well as enhanced customer service in admissions, libraries, and computer facilities have been obvious and

direct. These innovations have resulted in the appearance in college annual reports and journal articles of glowing accounts of cost-efficiency, employee empowerment, and customer satisfaction. When assessed on these criteria, there is no denying that implementation of TQM in higher education has dramatically improved the efficiency and effectiveness of the ways in which post-secondary institutions conduct business. Adopting the philosophy of continuous quality improvement in the classroom, however, has often met with resistance and skepticism. "Faculty members perceive it (TQM) as an alien business philosophy, especially when terms such as *customer* and *value* are used," notes Ronald E. Turner (1995, p.105). He suggests that the idea of treating students as customers is controversial because of the implied shift in power. Embracing a consumer (customer) focus, instructors fear, puts them at the mercy of self-serving students whose individual characteristics and backgrounds may not suit the academic climate in which they find themselves, or whose opinions, while they fail to differentiate between the crucial and the trivial, will be gathered, analyzed, and incorporated into a "mission statement" that equates customer dissatisfaction with system failure. On the other hand, there are those in academe who recognize the need for change and improvement and believe that "TQM values are more compatible with higher education than many existing management systems"...and "nowhere are the positive outcomes of TQM more needed than in the instructional delivery system - that is, TQM in the classroom" (Helms & Key, 1994, p.97).

Post-secondary institutions today are under increasing pressure caused by both internal and external forces (Tuttle, 1994), and in their rapidly changing environment, "a growing number of colleges and universities are embracing total quality management for

the same reasons that led industry to embrace it: Existing management systems are outmoded and can no longer ensure success in an increasingly competitive world" (p.26). According to Tuttle, external factors causing acute pressure include (1) reduction in funds, (2) competition for faculty, (3) competition for students, and (4) employer preference for students who have been trained in TQM principles. Internal forces that create their own momentum for change are caused by (1) pressure to reduce costs that results in additional workloads for teaching, administration, and support personnel; (2) low morale caused by salary stagnation or decreases, along with lack of staff empowerment, and (3) student dissatisfaction caused by the fallout from funding cuts such as decreased course offerings, increased tuition, reduced library hours, etc. Total quality as a strategic management process has been widely accepted as a way for the leadership of academic institutions to accomplish their business more effectively. But what of the philosophy and culture of TQM as it applies to curriculum and instruction? Donald W. Bryant, president of Carteret Community College in North Carolina, posits that there is "ample evidence of educational malaise: declining test scores, increased numbers of dropouts, and increased imbalances between educational products and societal needs" (Bryant, 1995, p.16). He reports on the findings of the Association of American Colleges in a document titled "Integrity in the College Curriculum" which proclaims that in order to improve learning "certain critical practices are necessary: teachers need to involve students in learning, set high expectations, assess learning, and provide feedback" (Bryant, p.16). In total quality parlance, this means developing curricula structured around the four cornerstones of TQM: customer satisfaction, continuous improvement, empowerment, and teamwork

(Leigh, 1995). A chief concern of academicians and cause of their continued resistance to TQM, according to H. Fred Walker, (1995) is that the process allows students to decide on course content. Walker believes this fear to be unfounded as does Myron Tribus (1993) who, while he acknowledges that students are the customers and should be consulted because they have a voice in defining the quality, insists that students are not the ones making decisions on features of the educational system. Tribus believes the students' role in the academic application of TQM should entail evaluating the delivery of curricular content—a role that traditionally has been placed on students throughout academia. Walker attempts to further allay the concerns of faculty by suggesting that "as long as (they) are willing and able to accept student evaluations regarding the quality of education as a source of feedback for improvement, rather than an irrelevant source of criticism, many of the problems associated with academic implementation of TQM can be overcome" (p.105).

## Total Quality Management and Teaching Methods

"Total Quality Management (TQM) is not another applications programme; it is not just another 'bolt on' and 'belt up' programme that we can add to existing practices" (Murgatroyd, 1993, p.269). Recognizing that implementing TQM is "arduous and painstaking" (p.269), Murgatroyd notes that in order for it to be successful, TQM in the schools must be a "whole school, whole staff, whole issue strategy" (p.272), and this implies of course, that there is a place for TQM in the classroom. The new focus on

accountability in education from political and accreditation sources as well as the business community (Murgatroyd, 1991; Smith & Baxter, 1995; Bryant, 1995) no longer makes it acceptable for colleges to say to their constituents, "Trust us. What we do cannot be measured" or "Our work is beyond your comprehension" (Smith & Baxter, 1995, p.40). Outcomes-oriented customers are measuring quality in terms of student learning, and student learning includes an assessment of content (theories, methods, knowledge) as well as specified cognitive skills and personal growth. High expectations, the foundation on which quality is built in any setting (Hubbard, 1994) become pivotal to the instruction process when we consider whether TQM techniques can be applied to classroom teaching.

One of the approaches copied from industry and used successfully in academe (Hubbard, 1994; Stralser, 1995) is **benchmarking.** Defined by Robert Camp in his book *Benchmarking,* (1989) the concept is described as "the continuous process of measuring products, services, and practices against the toughest competitors or those companies recognized as industry leaders" (p.12). Most colleges, suggests Stralser, already have a platform for benchmarking in place through program reviews and peer comparisons; and he observes that the world of academe, unlike its counterpart in business, is remarkably open to sharing information about practices, styles, methods, and the like. Visiting another school to observe its best practices provides a new route to improvements by stimulating planned changes (Stralser, 1995).

Another strategy utilized in academe to "sharpen its focus"...and establish "clearer definitions of quality appropriate to the task at hand" (Hubbard, 1994, p.94) is the "principle of parsimony" (Hubbard, p.94). This involves "rigorously pruning... good ideas

until only the vital few remain" (Hubbard, p.94). When applied to the area of improvement in instruction, the principle of parsimony is useful, for example, in helping curriculum developers identify major areas of competence germane to a number of programs so that decisions regarding coring course content can be implemented.

One of the logical appeals of TQM in industry is its focus on the customer. A quality organization recognizes that it has internal and external customers. Some staff work in direct contact with external customers, while others provide services in support of their fellow workers' front-line efforts. In academe, it is generally assumed that students are the customers of the institutions they attend; however, this concept causes problems because faculty members generally have difficulty understanding how the approach will play out in the classroom (Hubbard, 1994). Hubbard suggests that an orientation identifying the instructor and the student as partners who must cooperate to understand and satisfy their "customer's" (the employer's) needs is an effective way to involve students in instructional design and evaluation. Similarly, Bailey & Bennett (1996) assert that "the student is a product of the institution" (p.77), while "businesses and other employers of students are the ...customers"(p.77). Helms & Key (1994) report on a study that was conducted at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, to clarify how students perceived their classroom role. After the students had studied TQM principles and practices, they were asked to suggest ways that quality management techniques could be introduced into the classroom. The results suggest that "for effective implementation in the classroom, the TQM model must go beyond the simple view of the student as customer" (Helms & Key, 1994, p.98). Citing 65 percent of student responses that used

"exclusively employee language to describe how students should be dealt with" (p.98), Helms and Key report that employee-based concepts such as "empowerment, teambuilding, and driving out fear" do reflect the "employee situation" (p.98) in which students at the graduate level see themselves, while junior introductory course students are more likely to fit the customer role (with the added components of performance and motivation). Conceding that finding an appropriate term that reflects the complexity of the situation is next to impossible, Helms and Key suggest that what is most important is that instructors "consciously recognize, use, and even exploit the unique combination of roles they (students) take on in the classroom when applying TQM principles" (p.98).

Commenting on the dual roles of instructors and students in the education process, Sirvanci (1996) proposes the "knowledge flow process" (p.101) with instructors on the delivery end (server) and students on the receiving end (customer). Students also act as "labourers" because they are "not just passive recipients of education; they are actively involved in the process" (p.102) by learning material, doing projects, and preparing for tests; while instructors are "quality inspectors" (p.101) testing and grading students to ensure that only those who demonstrate sufficient knowledge can move on to the next stage of the education process. Sirvanci also makes the point that students are internal customers for the delivery of course material, and he notes: "To improve this component of classroom teaching, the best feedback comes from the students taking the class. In this case, student evaluation and satisfaction are appropriate measures of performance" (p.102). He offers a word of caution, however, by indicating that "satisfaction questionnaires need to be very specific, designed to measure only delivery aspects of the

course" (p.102).

Assessment and feedback are critical to the improvement of any process. In industry, quality was ensured by inspectors at the end of the assembly line who ranked and sorted what the workers produced. The quality movement (Crosby, 1979) advocated that inspectors be taken off the assembly line and the focus be placed on prevention instead. Deming concurred with Crosby but went a step further suggesting that quotas and "management by numbers" and "management by objective" be eliminated. "Substitute leadership," (Deming, 1986, p.24) was his advice. In higher education, the implication of Deming's observation is that the focus of assessment is shifted from assigning grades for the purpose of ranking and sorting to raising expectations and preventing failures. This approach includes an orientation which introduces students to the quality principles and provides testing along several dimensions (Hubbard, 1994; and Turner, 1995) so that students can be placed in appropriate classes and their progress measured.

In conclusion, it would appear that best practices in both course content and class presentation need to be determined as a first step toward developing formal benchmarks of faculty performance. Fram and Camp (1995) report on a survey conducted by the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business to determine how best practices for academic courses are determined. Replies indicated that student evaluations are the major criteria for determining how well a course is presented while departmental review is the most important criterion in assessing what is best in content. "If TQM is to be fully implemented on college campuses, its proponents will have to meet the benchmarking challenge," (p.71) say Fram and Camp who propose a benchmarking model that has been

used for more than a decade in industry and health care. The pressure is on higher education to change, they observe, so that customer requirements are met and quality is improved. As increasing numbers of post-secondary schools are embracing TQM/CQI principles, the benchmarking ball is in the academics' court.

## Microteaching : A Valuable Pre-service Experience

Microteaching is a technique that provides pre-service teachers (or in the case of post-secondary education, newly appointed instructors) with an opportunity to prepare and present a short lesson to their peers, to receive immediate feedback from both peers and a facilitator, and to respond to a videotape playback of their own performance. Utilizing feedback about their performance during the first attempt, the trainee repeats the lesson and again receives feedback about the quality of the presentation. Developed at Stanford University in 1963 by D. W. Allen and his associates, microteaching has evolved through four major approaches, each focusing on a different type of development: (1) finite skill acquisition; (2) modeling desired techniques; (3) learning through objectives; and (4) cognitive models. Because it allows interaction with the environment of teaching, microteaching enables preservice educators to develop concepts and acquire teaching skills that cannot be generated through passive explanation.

Gayle A. Wilkinson (1996) suggests that preservice teachers generally hold unrealistic views of teaching. Her research reveals that "their knowledge about teaching is idealistic and without theoretical bases" (p.211). Fuller and Manning (1973) observe that

pre-service teachers over-assess their abilities, and videotapes often result in their being confronted with actions that are "different from what they expected and worse than what they hoped for" p.476). Moreover, Veenman (1984) observes that new teachers must be prepared to survive "reality shock—the collapse of the missionary ideals formed during teacher training by the harsh and rude reality of classroom life" (p.143). Microteaching has become an accepted method of introducing preservice teachers to the roles of teachers and the realities of teaching, states Wilkinson, because it "effectively connects the theories of teaching with practice"... and it "provides opportunities for novice teachers to develop skills and sensitiviity to the complexities of teaching" (p.212). Macleod (1984) documents user satisfaction in research reports about the value of microteaching as a way of introducing newly appointed teachers to the "real context" of teaching. Recently labelled "small group teaching" or "peer teaching," the practice provides an opportunity for self confrontation in a safe environment that "challenges them without overwhelming them" (Wilkinson, 1996, p.213). Moreover, feedback from a variety of sources improves the accuracy of teachers' self-appraisal; and feedback containing a specific focus for reflection and evaluation increases the benefit of self-confrontation (Fuller & Manning, 1973).

Schur (1991) conducted a study on the effectiveness of microteaching when used as inservice for adult educators, and found that "the microteaching process is effective at increasing the instructors' self-confidence as well as increasing their existing awareness and understanding of their own teaching skills and abilities" (p.62). Her findings also show that "microteaching builds rapport and collegiality among staff," however, there was "no indication in the findings that microteaching is an effective means of providing

instructors with new teaching skills and techniques" (p.66).

## Enculturation of New Faculty

Rosch and Reich (1996) conducted a study into the ways in which institutional culture was expressed to new faculty and how the values, knowledge, attitudes, skills, and expectations of a particular academic culture are acquired by initiates. They define four stages based on research in faculty development: (1) the pre-arrival stage, dealing with an individual's pred\spositions prior to entering a new setting; (2) the encounter stage, dealing with preconceptions formed during recruitment and selection; (3) the adaptation stage dealing with external socialization processes and the initiate's identification with the organization; and (4) the commitment stage, dealing with the extent to which the norms and values of the local culture are assimilated by new members (p.116). Their findings suggest that adaptation to the new culture is "encouraged or inhibited through three dimensions: the work itself, the climate in which work is performed, and the network of social relations surrounding the work" (p.122). The study also found that during the encounter stage "new faculty were preoccupied with three developmental tasks: forming general impressions of the work setting, defining institutional expectations, and developing goals for what (they believed) performance expectations would be during the first academic appointment year" (p.125). The role of supervisors in providing assistance and encouragement directly impacted feelings of isolation, acceptance, or inclusion of new staff. In cases where supervisors assumed that being available was a sufficient,

unobtrusive support strategy, new faculty were "reluctant to make their needs known, fearing that they would be judged negatively" (p.129). The supervisor, state Rosch and Reich, "needs to take an active role in providing communication and teaching support opportunities"...and "promote general assimilation of newcomers to the work environment" (p.129). The research concluded that in departments where the work environment, faculty morale, and climate were rated highest, "newcomers experienced the least difficulty in adapting to the new setting"(p.127). Factors related to climate affect the overall functioning of an academic department, observe Rosch and Reich; therefore, defining ways in which the "collegial and intellectual" climate can be improved could enhance the "assimilation experiences of new faculty" (p.129).

Technical preparation, such as microteaching sessions and other instruction provided at inservice, and the enculturation process which includes work role orientation and integration into the organization are part of the unique experiences of the newly appointed instructor's first year. Those who are involved in faculty development can promote assimilation of newcomers to the work setting by providing a cumulative learning period during which individuals build upon and draw from informal communication encounters, clearly disseminated information, and relevant training experiences.

## Evaluation of Instruction

***"Teachers must become situational leaders; that is, they must consciously and willingly change their style to meet the demands and challenges of the teaching situation."***

G. A. Baker III

Whether they are called "student ratings of instruction," or " student evaluation of teaching,"or "student feedback on instruction," student opinions about instructional effectiveness are collected and widely used in universities, colleges, and technical institutes because they serve a variety of important practical purposes. El-Hassan (1995) suggests that they (a) provide diagnostic feedback to faculty about the effectiveness of their teaching; (b) measure teaching effectiveness to be used in tenure/promotion decisions; (c) provide information for students to use in the selection of courses and instructors; and (d) provide an outcome on a process description for research or teaching because they could answer questions such as: "How do teachers behave? Why do they behave as they do? and What are the effects of their behaviour?"(p.411).

Literature abounds about student evaluations; in 1988 W.E. Cashin did a summary of the research and listed more than 1300 articles and books related to the topic. Most of the research, notes El-Hassan, "deals with the dimensionality, validity, reliability, and generalizability of students' ratings of instruction and the investigation of the potentially 'biasing' factors that could affect the validity of these ratings" (p.411).

Over the past ten years, according to Ory (1990) the collection of student ratings has "evolved from a voluntary, student-initiated activity into a mandatory, or strongly

encouraged, administrator-initiated endeavor" (p.64). In the 1990s, he suggests, more colleges and universities will use student-ratings information for decisions about merit and promotion, while faculty "continue to view the information as a valid but single indicator of teaching effectiveness" (p.64).

One study, directed by Robert D. Abbott (1990) at the University of Washington examined student satisfaction with processes of collecting student ratings by varying the "(1) method (group interviews vs. individual standardized rating forms), (2) timing (midterm vs. end of course), and (3) amount of instructor reaction to student ratings (restricted vs.extended)" (p.201). Abbott and his colleagues concluded that students were more satisfied with interview evaluations at midterm followed by extended instructor reaction than with traditional approaches for collecting student opinions about instruction (i.e., standardized rating forms administered at the end of a course) (p.201).

The El-Hassan (1995) study, which was conducted at the American University of Beirut, found that instructor affective skills such as attitude towards students, interest in the course, etc., were more highly related to achievement than factors of instructional competence like preparedness and organization. This conclusion is controversial because some research findings support it while others do not. El-Hassan suggests further research to determine whether his findings are "course or discipline related or if they are culturally affected" (p.423).

In a study on the differential importance of various instructional dimensions to student achievement, Feldman (1989) concluded that the most important factors in facilitating student achievement were clarity of explanations, preparation and organization

of the course, stimulation of students' interests and motivation of students toward reaching high standards, class discussion and openness to the opinions of others, and the professor's availability and helpfulness. Feldman further indicates that, "Those specifiic instructional dimensions that are the most highly associated with student achievement tend to be the same ones that best discriminate among teachers with respect to the overall evaluations they receive from students" (p.619).

"In real classroom settings, students may attribute the strengths or weaknesses of a course to themselves or to the instructor, and this attribution may influence their overall evaluation" (p.581), say Joseph Ryan and Paul Harrison (1995) in an article about the relationship between individual instructional characteristics and the overall assessment of teaching effectiveness. The Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) developed by Marsh and his colleagues defines nine teaching factors: (1) learning, (2) enthusiasm, (3) organization, (4) group interaction, (5) individual rapport, (6) breadth of coverage, (7) examination fairness, (8) assignments, and (9) course difficulty, which become the independent or cue variables in the Ryan and Harrison study. The results of this study indicate that (a) the amount learned was consistently the most important factor affecting overall evaluations, and (b) course difficulty was consistently the least important factor affecting overall evaluations. These results are in contrast with findings by Cashin and Downey (1992) and Marsh (1983) who found that overall instructor ratings were more highly correlated with instructor enthusiasm and organization than with learning.

An obvious question that arises from the sea of information about instructor/instructional evaluation is: What are the end products of such evaluation?

What, if any, effect has evaluation had on instructional improvement? Have programs been changed or has instruction improved as a result of these evaluation efforts? Gil (1987)states that "instructional evaluation as it is currently practiced, has little, if any effect on college instruction" (p.57). He goes on to explain that, "feedback, instead of evaluation, needs to be the main technique used in faculty development, and its primary focus should be on instructional improvement" (p.57). Defining feedback as "information provided to instructors about their performance that includes recommendations for future improvement," (p.58) Gil recognizes that this is a "people process" where the focus is on the instructor rather than on the measurement or evaluation tools or on the product or outcomes. Observing that feedback and evaluation are related processes, Gil suggests that feedback aspires to improve faculty performance while evaluation aims to make judgments regarding its worth.

Gil believes that "facilitating conditions must exist for improvement to occur" (p.58). Aleamoni (1978) found that change is more likely to result when evaluation is coupled with consultation, but performance is influenced only to the extent that the individual uses the information provided. Opportunities to practice and continued feedback which includes subjective comments are critical components in both motivating and training teachers, suggests Gil, who believes that those responsibe for faculty development "need to individualize faculty evaluation and development and the processes through which they reach faculty" (p.61). Such individualization is no easy task, he admits; but to offset the threatening climate of evaluation, "supportive consultants providing faculty with personal and concrete feedback on teaching ...are important sources

of encouragement and stimulation" (p.61).

## Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the growth of the Total Quality Management/Continuous Quality Improvement movement in higher education with emphasis on its impact on teaching and learning processes. The literature pertaining to microteaching and faculty enculturation was also reviewed. Literature on student evaluation of instruction and writings on feedback for instructors were also surveyed. The exploration of these topics was intended to provide a broader context for and scholarly insight into the environment—both instructional and developmental—that can exist at post-secondary institutes such as the one where the research was conducted

# CHAPTER III

# METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine how effective the current pre-service training workshop provided by NAIT to its newly appointed instructors is perceived to be. In this qualitative study, structured interviews were conducted with selected faculty members to determine their perceptions of their preparedness for the role of instructor after completing the three-week "Becoming a Master Instructor" (BMI) workshop. It was expected that these instructors would provide information regarding weaknesses in the workshop and targets for improvement. To ensure internal validity, triangulation within this study was achieved by providing multiple perspectives on the research question. In addition to the (1) instructor source, perspectives will be obtained from structured interviews with (2) institute administrators at the program head level as well as with the (3) workshop coordinator and a primary facilitator. Checking interpretations from these sources was expected to contribute to the overall credibility of the research findings.

This chapter reports on the process of acquiring permission to conduct the study at the participating technical institute; it describes the design and development of the interview guides; and it relates the method used to select the sample and gather the data. Information about the piloting process is also included. The chapter concludes with observations about ethical issues and concerns.

## Gaining Access to the Institution

This study was conducted at an Alberta post-secondary technical institute where instructors are hired primarily on the basis of occupational competence. The institute provides an instructional methodology workshop to train newly appointed instructors in the critical processes of (1) developing course and lesson content, (2) presenting new material to a class of students, (3) developing interpersonal communication skills particularly in the areas of active listening and giving and receiving constructive feedback; and (4) measuring student performance. Formal permission to embark on the study was acquired from the Coordinator of Institutional Research and from the Vice-President of Student Services and Community Relations at the cooperating institute—see Appendix "A." A formal proposal defining this research project was submitted to the above-named individuals.

## Instruments and Techniques

The research questions of this study were addressed by conducting structured interviews with faculty who had agreed in advance to participate in the research. Initial contact was made by telephone and when a faculty member agreed to be interviewed, the date, time, and place of the interview were arranged to suit the convenience of the participant. A quiet office or conference room in which to conduct the interviews was booked by the researcher so that the actual tape recording process was not interrupted or interfered with. Written confirmation of the interview and a consent form, along with two

documents (Appendix B) which provide an overview of the research, were forwarded to participants several days in advance of the interview date.

**Population and Sample**

For this qualitative study, respondents were selected on the basis of the desired perspective they would bring to the research. Purposive, or criterion-based sampling was employed to select people who have had different associations with the BMI workshop: (1) instructors who were participants in the workshop within the past two years; (2) program heads whose newly appointed instructors had participated in the workshop within the past two years; and (3) the workshop coordinator and a primary facilitator who have had direct involvement with the workshop over the past two years or longer. Each person within these categories of respondents had the potential to contribute information regarding strengths and weaknesses, or suggest areas for improvement of the BMI workshop. The following criteria were applied:

1. Seventeen instructional staff were selected for participation in this study on condition that they:
   - (1) had been hired within the past two years and possess technical accreditation commensurate with hiring qualifications for the institute.
   - (2) currently occupy full-time instructional positions in both lecture- and lab-style classes.
   - (3) had participated in the "Becoming a Master Instructor" workshop within the past two years.
2. Two Program Heads were selected for participation on condition that they:
   - (1) had hired two or more new instructors over the past two years.
   - (2) are representative of the largest mechanical, and trades programs offered

by the institute.

(3) currently occupy full-time program head positions which include an instructional component.

(4) had participated in either the current "Becoming a Master Instructor" workshop or its predecessor.

**The Interview Guide**

The interview guide used in this study was constructed by the researcher using the Participant Manual of the BMI Workshop to confirm program content. Consultations with both the manager of Staff Training and Development and the coordinator of the workshop at the participating institute led to the rewording of certain questions to ensure clarity. The resulting carefully worded questions designed to evoke systematic and thorough responses as well as minimize the possibility of bias were asked of each participant in the same sequence. It was important that certain technical information relating to course content and subject matter be elicited from all respondents; but for purposes of this research, it was also necessary to "assess the perspective of the person being interviewed" (Patton, 1980, p.196). Therefore, to achieve the flexibility necessary to obtain insights, understandings, and perceptions of the topic, ad hoc questions that would provide clues to the feelings and opinions of the respondents were also formulated. The interview guide for instructional staff is divided into four distinct sections: (1) Background/Demographic Information; (2) Course Development and Delivery Information; (3) Classroom/Learning Environment Information; and (4) General/Overall Comments. The first section was designed to provide information about the participant's age, gender, educational/technical background, and current teaching assignment. Section

II probed instructor perceptions of their effectiveness at organizing course units and lesson content as well as the effectiveness of the teaching method (ROPES) as prescribed in the BMI workshop. Measuring student performance was also addressed in this section. The questions included in Section III deal specifically with the instructor's perception of his/her interpersonal communication skills of active listening, giving and receiving constructive feedback and constructive criticism, as well as the instructor's respectful and positive attitude towards students. Section IV allowed the participants to express their opinions about the overall effectiveness of the BMI workshop as well as to identify ways in which the training could be improved. All questions in Section II and Section III were directly related to the research question and sub-questions.

The interview guide for program heads was divided into two sections: (1) Background/Demographic Information; and (2) Perceptions and Opinions of the Effectiveness of BMI. The questions in this section were aimed at gaining an understanding of the thoughts of administrators (at the program head level) regarding the value of the BMI training. (Program heads complete performance assessments on instructors and are expected to be actively involved in the resolution of any classroom or instructional difficulties an instructor might be encountering.)

The interview guides for the workshop coordinator and the workshop facilitator were divided into two sections: (1) Background/Demographic Information; and (2) Perceptions and Opinions of the Effectiveness of BMI. The questions in Section II of these particular guides were aimed at capturing the individual judgments and perceptions of the respondents, as well as their understandings of the effectiveness of BMI from their particular perspectives as deliverers of the training.

**Data Collection (Interviews)**

Specific data describing faculty perceptions of the effectiveness of BMI training were gathered through a standardized open-ended interview using questions designed by the researcher. The researcher's background as an instructor who has taken BMI training, coupled with access to all the material currently used in the workshop (including exercises, scenarios, and worksheets) ensured a level of familiarity with the topic. This preparation was essential to the interview process so that appropriate probing and follow-up questions could be formulated, and so that feedback and reinforcement could be offered when a response or observation was deemed to be particularly insightful. The interview questions for instructional staff were field tested with a faculty member who met the selection criteria discussed in the previous section. This field test resulted in decreasing the number of questions from 20 to 15 and rephrasing the wording of some interview items to make the meaning very clear. It also determined that none of the questions could be construed as threatening, and that tape-recording the responses was the best way to to gather the data because it allowed for uninterrupted flow of both questions and answers. The field test also provided the interviewer with an opportunity to review the opening comments and confirm that good rapport was being established with the interviewee. Likewise, the interview questions for administrators were field tested with a program head who met the selection criteria. This field testing resulted in rewording one or two interview items and, as in the case of the instructor field-test, it confirmed the participant's level of comfort with both the questions and the data gathering method. The interviews were conducted by the researcher at a time and place convenient to the individual respondent; all interview questions and answers were tape-recorded and transcribed by the researcher.

To ensure a high degree of comparability and focus, all interviewees in a particular grouping (e.g. instructors or program heads) were asked the same questions in the same order, and questions were worded in a completely open-ended format. All participants were given a written overview of the study in advance of the interview, and the researcher verbally reviewed the purpose of the study at the beginning of the interview session. In addition to skill and technique, according to Patton (1990) an equally important element in successful interviewing is a "genuine interest in and caring about the perspectives of other people" (p.279). With this thought in mind, the researcher was prepared to be a good reflective listener in anticipation of respondents' biases, perceptions, and attitudes being expressed. Maintaining a stance that was nonjudgmental, respectful, and sensitive to the respondent throughout the interview was deemed by the researcher to be critical to extracting worthwhile information, and it is the perception of the researcher that interviewees felt a sense of freedom and security to express their honest and candid opinions.

## Ethical Issues and Concerns

Ethical issues and concerns surrounding this study could originate from two sources: (1) the researcher, and/or (2) the participants.

The issue of motives and intentions was addressed by the researcher at the outset of each interview to make it clear that the study was not an evaluation of participants, but rather a gathering of perceptions and opinions about the effectiveness of the instructor preparation program that currently exists at the participating institute.

Eliminating, or at least clarifying researcher biases and assumptions relating to the topic under study through the process of *bracketing* was an essential step in ensuring that the data were confronted and analyzed from a fresh and open viewpoint without prejudgment or imposed meaning. The researcher's current role as an **administrator** whose responsibilities include instructor performance reviews and addressing student concerns relating to instruction provides strong impetus for examining the "just-in-time" training provided for "content" experts who have had little or no formal preparation in the process of instructing adult learners. Moreover, the researcher who has completed an earlier version of the BMI workshop, and who holds an education degree (adult education major), but is currently in the role of **student** in a master's program in adult and higher education, holds a certain opinion about the effectiveness of a crash course in training competent instructors. The researcher's role as **instructor** predisposes empathy to 20-hour teaching loads, diverse instructional assignments, student feedback on instruction forms, and the tyranny of KPI's (key performance indicators). The researcher's role as a **practitioner** in adult education for almost two decades affirms the opinion that one of the key requisites of successful adult learning is relevance, or meeting the learner's needs; and the BMI workshop certainly attempts to meet the felt and prescribed needs of potential instructors. This "looking inside" (Patton, 1990, p.407) to become aware of personal bias and to eliminate personal involvement with the subject ensured that "all aspects of the data are treated with equal value" (Patton, 1990, p.408).

Ethical concerns relating to the treatment of both respondents and data are covered in the design of the research which is scrutinized by a Research Ethics Review

Committee appointed by the University of Alberta. The procedure for observing ethical guidelines involves providing full details of the research methodology, as well as the nature of involvement of human participants. Steps the researcher will use to explain the purpose and nature of the research to participants, to obtain informed consent of participants, and to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of participants are provided in a written submission to the Research Ethics Review Committee.

Interviewees were assured of their anonymity; they were given the option to not participate, and those who elected to take part were asked to sign a consent form. Every effort was made by the researcher to ensure that the program heads who participated in the study were not perceived to be appraising the performance of newly appointed instructional staff. If it had been deemed necessary, a group meeting involving both faculty and supervisors at which the researcher would explain the purpose of involving program heads in the study would have been scheduled; however, instructor participants did not express any concern at all about having program heads participate in the research.

## Summary

This chapter outlined the process of gaining permission to conduct the research at the cooperating institution; it described the method of choosing sample participants; and it defined the data gathering procedures. It also addressed ethical issues and concerns that might be associated with this research. In the next chapter, the data gathered through the 21 structured interviews are analyzed, and findings of the study are presented.

# CHAPTER IV

# FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

## Introduction

The question studied in this research was: To what extent do instructors who participate in the three-week "Becoming a Master Instructor" (BMI) workshop provided by NAIT perceive that they are effectively prepared for their teaching role? The following five sub-questions guided the research and formed the basis of the Interview Guides (Appendices "A" through "F") which were employed to gather opinions and perceptions from the participants in this study.

1. How do instructors perceive their course development abilities? Do they feel competent to develop a course in their specialty area within prescribed guidelines?

2. How do instructors perceive their lesson planning abilities? Do they feel competent to prepare lesson plans that define the major steps, sub-steps, and support knowledge necessary to enable students to reach the instructional objectives of the course?

3. How do instructors perceive their abilities to prepare and deliver an effective presentation following the "ROPES" (Review, Overview, Presentation, Exercise, Summary) method?

4. How do instructors perceive their interpersonal communication abilities when dealing with students? Do they feel competent to engage in active listening and to give and receive constructive feedback and constructive criticism in an instructional setting?

5. How do administrators at the program head level as well as the workshop coordinator and the facilitator perceive that instructors' abilities in course development, lesson planning and delivery, and interpersonal communicatiion are influenced by participating in the BMI workshop?

Seventeen of the interviewees were instructors in the program areas of apprenticeship trades, technology, and engineering. These three divisions were chosen because they represent the programs that have the highest numbers of students and instructors. Moreover, the primary mandate of the institute is to provide apprenticeship training, so it seemed appropriate to have strong representation (nine instructors) from that segment. Two institute administrators (program heads), one workshop facilitator, and the workshop coordinator (who also fulfills an administrative role) were the other respondents.

The outcomes of the study will be presented under two major headings: Demographic Data and Interview Findings. Demographic data are presented on the participating instructors, on the four other respondents, and on the entire faculty of the cooperating institute (of which all respondents are part). Gathered as Part I of the structured interview, data on the instructors are presented in Table 1, and on the other respondents in Table 3. Table 2 provides demographic characteristics of the entire institute faculty body which includes both instructors and administrators. In addition to comments on the congruence of the faculty sample to the population of the institute, other noteworthy comparisons are provided as well.

## Demographic Data

**Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Participating Instructors (n=17)**

| Gender | Male | Female | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| n=17 | 14 | 3 | | |
| Percent | 82% | 18% | | |
| **Age** | **>35** | **36-44** | **45-54** | **55+** |
| n=17 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 1 |
| Percent | 23.5% | 41.2% | 29.4% | 5.9% |
| **Education** | **2 yrs PostSec.** | **3 yrs PostSec.** | **4 yrs PostSec.** | **5 + yrs PostSec** |
| n=17 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 4 |
| Percent | 29.4% | 35.3% | 11.8% | 23.5% |
| **Program Area** | **Trades** | **Technology** | **Engineering** | **Other** |
| n=17 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 0 |
| Percent | 53% | 29.4% | 17.6% | 0% |

**Table 2 Demographic Characteristics of Faculty at Cooperating Institute (n=721)**

| Gender | Male | Female | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| n=721 | 587 | 134 | | |
| Percent | 81.4% | 18.6% | | |
| **Age** | **>35** | **35-44** | **45-54** | **55+** |
| n =721 | 33 | 231 | 315 | 142 |
| Percent | 4.6% | 32.1% | 43.7% | 19.7% |
| **Education** | **2 yrs. PostSec.** | **3 yrs. PostSec.** | **4 yrs. PostSec.** | **5+ yrs PostSec** |
| n=721 | 112 | 58 | 119 | 432 |
| Percent | 15.5% | 8.0% | 16.5% | 59.9 |
| **Program Area** | **Trades** | **Technology** | **Engineering** | **Other** |
| n=721 | 241 | 111 | 190 | 179 |
| Percent | 33.4% | 15.4% | 26.4% | 24.8% |

Of the 17 instructors interviewed for this research, 3, or 18 percent were female which accurately represents the 134 females comprising 18.6 percent of the entire faculty. Over the past two years 26.5 percent (1995) and 43.2 percent (1996) of the participants in the BMI workshop were from trades/apprenticeship programs (mostly from the welding, pipetrades, and machinist/millwright programs). This number is consistent with the 241 (33.4 percent) of faculty who teach in trades/apprenticeship programs. For this reason, a high number of participants in this study (nine instructors, 53 percent of the respondents) were chosen from the trades area, some with one and some with two years of teaching experience since completing BMI. Worth noting is that 13 newly appointed instructors (32 percent of the total complement of 41 participants) in this year's (1997) BMI workshop are from trades/ apprenticeship programs.

According to the two program heads who were interviewed for this study—and instructors themselves confirm this—the seemingly high turnover rate among trades/apprenticeship instructors could be attributed to the current demand in industry for certified tradesmen. Observing that it is becoming increasingly difficult to attract instructors with the broad range of experience and certification most desirable for teaching positions in trades/apprenticeship programs, administrators concede that, even at the top of the scale, instructor salaries cannot compete with the high wages paid by industry. This situation is exacerbated by institute policy governing placement on the salary scale which awards credit for 2 years of preparation to holders of multiple journeyman tickets in related trades (such as steamfitter, gasfitter, pipefitter), and 3 years of preparation for diverse journeyman certification in, for example, the machinist, millwright, and welding trades. Salaries tied to these mid-point positions on the six-level

scale are woefully short of industry rates, and the only way instructors can move across on the scale is to take univeristy courses or participate in professional development workshops. For many, this is seen as punitive, and master tradesmen who are proud of their occupational competence and have been recognized and rewarded as experts in their fields are disgruntled and somewhat hostile towards the institute attitude that implies they are deficient in what it takes to get the job done. This situation is further aggravated by the fact that instructors desiring to return to industry for upgrading/updating their technical skills so that they can maintain currency of instruction frequently receive little or no encouragement or administrative support to do this. Furthermore, the present policy , although it makes provision to grant industrial leave for technical upgrading, does not recognize it by providing financial reward in terms of movement on the salary scale. Most of the trades instructors interviewed indicated that they are struggling to maintain a lifestyle founded on high industrial wages (most, if not all, return to industry for summer employment to supplement their income), and during times of high demand for their skills, they find themselves increasingly disillusioned with the low wages and stressful life of an instructor to the point where some actually resign and return to their trades. Given the high concentration of trades instructors involved in BMI training on an on-going basis, their voice is a strong one in defining the real and perceived needs indigenous to their unique instructional and employment circumstances.

The 35.3 percent of participating instructors who possess 4 or 5+ years of post-secondary education (this equates to bachelor's or master's degrees) are likely to possess stronger language and communication abilities, better critical thinking skills, and greater familiarity with learning resources than will their counterparts whose post-secondary

focus has been on skill building in trades and technologies. Throughout the study, apprenticeship instructors noted repeatedly that there is a difference between their needs and those of other instructors—a sentiment that was reinforced by their rejection of segments of the workshop they considered to be irrelevant. No other participants in the inservice targeted the same components or expressed the same dissatisfaction.

Of the 17 instructors who participated in the research, 11 (64.7 percent) are younger than 44 years of age, with the highest concentration between 36 and 44 years. This is considerably younger than present institute faculty, of which 457 out of 721 (63.4 percent) are older than 45 years. These figures point to an aging faculty, with many who will be retiring within five to ten years, if not sooner. As more and more staff members reach retirement age, larger numbers of newly appointed instructors will be requiring orientation and preparation-for-instruction training. A major challenge facing the faculty development planners will be to translate expressed needs into a meaningful program design and to develop effective strategies for its implementation.

Demographic data on the administrators (program heads) as well as on the workshop coordinator and the workshop facilitator are presented next in Table 3.

**Table 3 Demographic Characteristics of Other Interview Respondents (n=4)**

| **Gender** | **Male** | **Female** | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| n = 4 | 4 | 0 | | |
| Percent | 100% | 0% | | |
| **Age** | **27-35** | **36-44** | **45-54** | **55+** |
| n = 4 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Percent | 0% | 50% | 50% | 0% |
| **Education** | **2 yrs PostSec** | **3 yrs PostSec** | **4 yrs PostSec** | **5+ yrs PostSec** |
| n = 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Percent | 0% | 25% | 25% | 50% |
| **Program Area** | **Trades** | **Technology** | **Engineering** | **Other** |
| n = 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Percent | 75% | 0% | 0% | 25% |

Three of the four "other" respondents in this study represent institute administration. All respondents are males, and while some institute administrators are female, 39 out of 47 (83 percent) of program heads are male; 10 out of 11 (91 percent) deans are male; and there are no females (0 percent) at the senior administrative level. The program heads interviewed for this study represent program areas that have the highest number of instructors overall at the institute as well as having had the highest number of participants in the BMI workshop over the past two years.

Two of the four respondents have more than five years of post-secondary education (indicating a master's degree or higher) which is representative of the 59.9 percent of institute faculty (432 out of 721) whose academic credentials are similar.

Workshop facilitators are usually selected from a pool of instructors who express an interest in the BMI program and meet specific criteria defined by the Staff

Training and Development Department. Organizers try to have a blend of program areas represented on the facilitation team (trades, technologies, engineering, business, etc.) and a gender mix as well. Reports of past workshops reveal that the team is generally diverse with broad representation from the different disciplines. The facilitator who participated in this research was chosen because of his long association with the BMI workshop—he has been a facilitator for approximately 15 years. Apart from his lengthy involvement with BMI, he is a full-time instructor in an apprenticeship program, and in this capacity was able to offer opinions (which varied from program instructors in many cases) that provide a different perspective on the contentious issue of incorporating workshop training into apprenticeship classes.

# Interview Findings

## Interviews with Instructors

The primary objective of the "Becoming a Master Instructor" workshop is to effectively prepare newly appointed instructors for their teaching role. Desired skills and abilities relating to course development and delivery, evaluation of student performance, and creating a positive learning environment form the specific topics covered by the program. These skill areas are directly related to the sub-questions of the research, and formed the basis of the 15 open-ended questions that were asked of the interview participants. The following narrative reporting the findings of interviews with instructors has been organized according to the Interview Guide for Instructors described in Chapter

3, and found in Appendix C and will clearly define the relationship between the BMI workshop and instructor effectiveness as perceived by both faculty and administrators.

**Course Development and Delivery**

This section of the BMI workshop is designed to teach new instructors how to "think through, document, and deliver course material in an organized fashion" (BMI Participant Manual, 1993, Part 1. p.1). Two modules covering course content development and lesson content development present the steps to be followed when (1) "taking large pieces of information and organizing them into sequenced manageable parts" and when (2) developing instructional objectives and preparing "support knowledge and content steps" for a specific lesson. Four questions aimed at determining instructor perceptions about the effectiveness of these two modules of the workshop were asked. Interview responses to those questions revealed that at NAIT, instructors in the apprenticeship programs are not required to write instructional objectives for the theory related to their trades. Instructional objectives for all four years of apprenticeship training are prescribed by the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board; therefore, instructors in these programs deemed this module of the BMI workshop to be of relatively little value to them. Instructors are required, however, to develop their own lesson plans relating to specific objectives, so their opinion of the lesson planning aspect of the module was much more positive. In contrast with the course preparation role of apprenticeship instructors, those within a typical one-year certificate or two-year diploma program at NAIT often "start from scratch" when preparing to teach a new course. Updated or different computer software, expanded requirements by industry, or

totally new fields of study often necessitate creation or major reworking of topics, sub-topics, and objectives, plus activities and exercises. While colleagues are generally willing to help by providing course binders and whatever resources are available, new instructors find that they still need to tailor the lessons to reflect their own knowledge and experience. One significant challenge identified by new instructors is the task of organizing and sequencing course material so that levels of learner expertise can be built upon as the course unfolds; another is determining a course schedule that allows sufficient time to cover presentation of the lessons as well as lab or "shop" time to hone skills and perfect techniques. Overall, new instructors feel that the BMI workshop does an adequate job of preparing them for both the course development and lesson preparation components of their teaching role. The following comments affirm instructor perceptions of the value of the workshop in providing a "structure," a "skeleton," and a "framework" upon which to develop both a course content matrix and individual lesson plans.

> The BMI was helpful in the way I organized my approach to planning the lesson.
>
> The workshop helped me structure the lessons so that they made sense.
>
> It shows you how to build a lesson plan.
>
> It was something I was looking for when I was hired because I did not have much expertise in doing or writing course content or course development. I was very frightened to do those kinds of things, and when it was introduced in BMI, I was very grateful. They did a good job of planting that model on me, and I am glad they did that. It gave me a good foundation and something that I was looking for.

Three of the seventeen instructors interviewed hold Bachelor of Education degrees, and one has had previous instructional experience; nevertheless, they were still

required to complete the workshop. Each of these participants offered the opinion that the BMI approach was useful to them in organizing course content and preparing lesson plans because of the "structure," and because it was "hands-on." Especially helpful, they noted, was the fact that in the workshop they were building lesson plans around topics that they would actually be teaching in the very near future. The element of relevance (for many who began teaching two weeks after the workshop, this was defiinitely "just-in-time"training), coupled with the manual that was provided to guide them through future use of the techniques were considered by "degreed" participants to be strong points of this component of BMI.

Given the nature and number of most instructional assignments (an instructor can have three or more courses to prepare and deliver per semester), support of fellow instructors is deemed to be a "very high need for a new instructor." This study found that support varies widely among programs and schools at NAIT. In each of the apprenticeship programs and three of the diploma programs represented in this study, moral support and encouragement offered by colleagues was "strong," "tremendous," "excellent," "above and beyond," and "couldn't be better." Fellow instructors are "very unselfish and very willing to help," but in many cases are so busy themselves that they can't afford the time to do more. Some programs have a formal mentoring or "buddy" system in place for new instructors which actually teams them with a seasoned teacher who encourages them to sit in on classes, allows them to attend lab or shop sessions, and invites them to make use of prepared overheads, exams, or other resource materials. On the other hand, three respondents noted that in their programs no mentoring goes on; however, long-time instructors will answer a question if they are asked, but they do not

"open up" to the newcomers readily. Two respondents cited the teaching load as a definite factor contributing to this dearth of support—"people are willing, but we're pretty thin here." In certain programs also, the teaching area of some instructors is so specialized there are no other people around who share their expertise, so they "didn't get any help," and "struggled through it."

Another major component of the BMI workshop teaches new instructors how to actually present the lesson they have prepared. A method of instruction called **ROPES** (**R**eview, **O**verview, **P**resentation, **E**xercise, **S**ummary) covers five points that good presenters consider when delivering new material. Three questions were asked during the interviews to determine instructor perceptions of the effectiveness of the ROPES method of instruction. Instructors were unanimous in their agreement that ROPES is a highly efficient and effective method of delivering a lesson. Termed a "repeatable process" that "helps you organize" and "keeps me constant," instruction in the ROPES method was cited as by far the most valuable component of the workshop. Participants are assigned to small groups of 6 or 7 persons, and everyone is required to do four presentations incorporating all elements of the ROPES method—beginning with a 10-minute presentation and ending with a full one-hour ROPES lesson. Respondents in the interviews said:

> The practice teaching that I did at BMI was really the most useful thing I've done...I got a lot more out of BMI than I did from the university.
>
> Those practice sessions that we had in the small groups were excellent...we gave our presentations, then we had an evaluation by our team leader...the peer feedback was very valuable. I was very comfortable because the group gave honest opinions. By the third presentation, I was very comfortable with using the ROPES method.

Utilizing ROPES was great. I have been able to develop my skills with ROPES and the more I use it the better I get at it.

ROPES was good...you can't stick to ROPES every single time, but it gives you a good basic formula...

The BMI workshop teaches ROPES and that makes the instructor prepared. There is no doubt about it; you cannot go in there and wing it and have all those elements in there. In order to have the elements in, you have to prepare. It does make a difference.

The introduction of the ROPES method was wonderful. We know that the presentation part is really important, but I find the review—getting the hook on them right away—is even more important.

I think ROPES is an excellent presentation technique.

The primary focus was on ROPES, and for some people it was a confidence builder. In my group there were two of us who had taught before and five who hadn't. It was a real confidence builder for them.

Despite these very positive comments, two significant drawbacks which seriously impact the extent to which the ROPES method of instruction is being utilized were identified: (1) It is a very time-consuming way to prepare a lesson. Instructors noted that for every one hour of instruction, the ROPES method requires a minimum of two to three hours of preparation. While affirming that the material thus prepared makes for "a richer lesson," instructors who are teaching three different courses in a 20-hour-per-week (or more) schedule assert that ROPES is a luxury they simply cannot afford. They observe that they try to identify topics that "the students may have difficulty understanding"or material that "they (students) have to master" or "that is pertinent before they (students) can go any further in the course" and prepare ROPES lessons for them, but admit that every lesson "is not a ROPES lesson." (2) Delivering a lesson ROPES-style; that is, proceeding methodically through the five steps of Review,

Overview, Presentation, Exercise, and Summary would require that each course be allocated double the instructional time it is now assigned. Instructors in apprenticeship programs note that they have a "phenomenal" amount of material to cover in the eight weeks that students are in the program. While not all the material they must cover lends itself to a ROPES lesson, one instructor commented that "ROPES is the one that works;" however, many are resigned to "talking and giving notes," and "giving them facts, facts, facts." Instructors in full-time certificate and diploma programs made the same observations regarding the quantity of material to be covered in courses and the time allocation. Noting, as did the apprenticeship instructors, that there are so many competencies for students to master, and agreeing that the ROPES method "allows you to get the salient material across very well," instructors feel stymied by the lack of time to follow the "made-for-NAIT method."

A question about the "measuring student performance" component of the workshop was also posed in this part of the interview. Participants felt that the two presentations on this aspect of the instructors' role—one on test-writing and one on classroom assessment techniques—were informative, but did not cover the topics in sufficient depth to be really helpful.

**Classroom/Learning Environment**

This component of the BMI workshop focuses on the classroom environment and interpersonal communication in an adult instructional setting, paying particular attention to the importance of modelling appropriate and effective interpersonal communication skills. With a focus on the instructor as a facilitator of learning, the

objective of this module is to "improve understanding and application of [these] skills" (BMI Participant Manual, (1993) Module 9, p.2.). Following presentations by workshop leaders on classroom management and interpersonal communication skills, participants engage in exploration and experiential activities where they practice techniques of active listening and being assertive as well as giving and receiving constructive feedback, and giving constructive criticism.

Three questions asked of interview respondents probed for perceptions of the effectiveness of these activities. The questions elicited a wide range of responses from "fascinating...I wish they had delved into that more," to "To me it was common sense, there really wasn't anything new," to "I thought it was a bit of a joke...There was no benefit at all as far as I was concerned." Fourteen of the comments offered about this module of BMI could be described as definitely positive and thirteen were definitely negative. Fifty-four percent of the negative and 29 percent of the positive comments were made by instructors in the trades programs. Attitudes of some of the trades (apprenticeship) instructors towards this component of the workshop are manifest in comments such as:

> "I come from a trades background, we're pretty practical...and I thought a lot of those [exercises] were pretty adolescent kinds of things that would have been better left out."
>
> "There was a lot of role-playing, a lot of activity kind of stuff, and to me it seemed to be outside of what I was there to get."
>
> "If we tried role-playing with apprentices, we'd be laughed out of the classroom."
>
> "I don't know that I learned anything at the workshop more than common sense."

"...coming from me, being a tradesman, we had all those little exercises in BMI—I call them 'touchy-feely' kinds of things—and I am not that kind of person."

One instructor admitted to being very uncomfortable in a participative setting, observing that "people ...are uncomfortable when they start to participate and there is no way out, and I had a lot of problems with that...I tried to learn as much as I could, but I don't learn well in those situations."

The sessions on listening and questioning techniques and on being attentive to student body language were deemed very helpful as indicated by the following observations:

> There is no doubt that the portion where we were asked to do the listening and take constructive criticism was definitely very important. Every time someone asks a question, I think back to what I learned in BMI: to give this person a chance to speak up, you have to be very careful not to offend anybody or shatter their confidence. This was taught in BMI.
>
> I really picked up a lot on body language. They [BMI facilitators] talked about comfort zones and body language—trying to read the person because sometimes students won't say exactly what they are feeling, so you have to pick up on other signs that they are emitting. I find this very important, and very useful.
>
> Questioning, how to ask proper questions was the most useful...Asking the right questions is about the best that I have used. Being able to ask good questions and pick out the students who are having difficulties and ask them the right questions...BMI raised my level of awareness of this—to be aware of what they [students] are saying, try to ask the question to make sure that you understand what they are saying.
>
> They [facilitators] got the message across to me that it is important for me to be a good listener and build a relationship with students so they can come and ask me a question. The seed has been planted; it needs a little fertilizer and some sunshine!
>
> I believe an instructor has to be able to deliver the lesson, but he also has to listen to the students when they ask the questions. I feel that no matter what a person says, it may be of importance...Sometimes the questions they are asking aren't relative and they don't know how to ask questions, so you have to keep prying for more information...you are always listening and probing.

Using humour in the classroom and maintaining good rapport with students by being "respectful" and "approachable;" in other words, "connecting" with them were cited as ways in which instructors work at creating a positive learning environment. Several noted that they have had good evaluations from students who indicate that they are treated with respect by the instructor. Observations such as: "I treat the students the way I would like to be treated myself..." and "I treated them like adults and we respected each other" suggest that the adult learning principles taught in BMI are impacting instructor classroom behaviours.

The model that BMI taught for providing constructive feedback was another component of this module that instructors remembered and considered to be valuable to them in their role. Overall, instructor perceptions are that certain specific aspects of this module are worthwhile, but unless a technique or method was new and innovative, they thought it was merely "common sense." Unless it was considered by them to be something that they could and would use consistently; they felt it was neither useful nor important.

**General Comments/Observations**

This section of the interview guide for instructors solicits general comments and observations about instructor perceptions regarding the overall effectiveness of the BMI workshop. Two of the questions ask what instructors believe to be the most beneficial and helpful components of the workshop; and two questions invite recommendations for improvements. Respondents indicated a level of satisfaction with the workshop overall; specific components were deemed extremely valuable and useful; nevertheless,

shortcomings were identified and suggestions for the betterment of what is generally regarded as a good program were offered.

Without a doubt, the feature of the workshop that was deemed most useful to instructors is the practice teaching. Throughout the three weeks, instructors prepare (following the ROPES method of presentation) and deliver four separate "lessons" which are videotaped, critiqued by members of their small group who offer immediate feedback, and evaluated by a workshop facilitator who has been assigned to work with the small group for the duration. For many instructors, the time it takes to prepare a lesson as prescribed by the ROPES method was a "shocking" discovery; and the actual experience of presenting new material to a peer group who are essentially strangers and being videotaped while you do it was described as "nerve-racking," and "definitely very stressful." The benefits of the practice teaching sessions were described in such statements as:

> Because I had no teaching experience whatsoever, this (practice teaching) prepared me very well for what to expect in my new role as an instructor.
>
> The one thing that I still remember from BMI, and I don't think it will ever leave me as an instructor, was the ROPES. I think it is a great tool for a starting instructor. That one definitely stands out the most
>
> ...doing the practice teaching sessions to your peers...the way they presented the criticism was so nice, you couldn't feel bad about it. It was a learning experience.
>
> The practice teaching sessions...that is the most valuable part of it because that's what we are going to be doing so you might as well get the experience.
>
> ...it was having to do those lesson plans and presentations to a group of people who knew nothing about your subject matter...the step-by-step approach was really helpful..."

> ...the practice teaching was very beneficial. It was nice that we could do it in groups of six or eight...it made people comfortable...the comments that came from each other [were] very objective and from the heart.
>
> I think...one of the things...I found most beneficial was the ROPES. It really focuses an individual on what has to happen. It works.
>
> ROPES...was the most useful, practical thing. We are going to use it every day.

Other aspects of the workshop that were commended include the lectures on adult learning styles; the course development module, particularly the objective-writing exercises; and the classroom management activities.

Part of the overall assessment of workshop attendees consists of a classroom visitation/observation wherein a workshop facilitator critiques a full one-hour lecture prepared and delivered by the new instructor. Perceptions about this practice among those interviewed are widely divergent. Some believe that it was a useful exercise which provided additional coaching that helped them refine their instructional style. Instructors who found it beneficial said they felt that way because they had seized the opportunity to prepare a solid ROPES lesson on a difficult topic or concept, in some cases in a new subject area as well. They had invested considerable time and effort into preparing the lesson, they had worked at delivering an effective presentation, and they regarded the follow-up process as worthwhile. In fact, they would welcome more than one follow-up observation. Others judged it to be ineffectual because the instructor knows well in advance about the upcoming visit, he/she prepares a ROPES lesson (sometimes it's the only ROPES lesson they've done all term, and sometimes they choose a topic they are really comfortable with), the students "participate in the charade," and the facilitator is delighted. Trades instructors, particularly in apprenticeship programs, believe that their instructional assignments are vastly different from those in full-time programs; therefore,

they feel the BMI leaders "just didn't have a very good handle on what it would be like to instruct apprentices," and "they [don't] realize in BMI how things are for us here. I don't think they can know unless they actually are in these programs." These instructors suggested that on-going assessment of their classroom performance should be conducted by their own program people, either an administrator (Program Head or Assistant Program Head) or a designated instructor. They also indicated that if they encountered a problem with teaching, they would seek help from their program head or an experienced instructor ("they know the stuff and they are able to give me good points about a better way"). Said one instructor, "I absolutely would not think about going to the leaders of BMI." Similar sentiments were expressed by others. Although they appreciate the intent of the follow-up, and they feel the facilitators' efforts are bona fide, some instructors are of the opinion that having a mentor within their program to counsel and support them during their first year would be more useful and more significant than one follow-up visit by a BMI leader. Interestingly, several instructors indicated that sitting down with their program supervisor and reviewing the *Student Feedback on Instruction* form administered by the program was more meaningful to them than the BMI follow-up feedback.

An incidental "follow-up" benefit emanating from the BMI workshop is the camaraderie that develops among participants. Sometimes two or more instructors from a single program or school get to know one another during the three-week workshop and they "stay in touch." Most beneficial about these liaisons, they adjudge, are the opportunities to share common experiences with others who are "in the same boat" or "going through the same thing." Positive attitudes and acceptance by their peers, which

is demonstrated by encouragement, support, mentoring, and team playing are deemed extremely significant ways in which new instructors are made to feel "comfortable" or that they "belong."

While the present follow-up to the BMI workshop was recognized as a well organized, well orchestrated exercise, it's value to new instructors is somewhat dubious. One suggestion for a different kind of follow-up was that particular components of the workshop be repeated or delivered at another time. Because of information overload during BMI, it is felt that a refresher in topics such as test-writing, for example, could be offered just before instructors begin preparing mid-term exams; or practicing classroom assessment (for which there are many different techniques) could be revisited or strengthened by means of several short seminars scheduled sometime during their first year when new instructors have established themselves in their instructional roles and achieved a measure of comfort with program routines. Reinforcing some of the BMI material in this way is consistent with adult learning theory which supports two educational psychology concepts: (1) the notion of "teachable moments"—that is, recognizing the time when people are ready to learn instead of promoting ideas whose time for acceptance has not yet arrived; and (2) the "opportunity to practice"—that is, realizing that a learning experience exists when the learner has an opportunity to practice the desired behaviour.

The final two questions asked of instructors invited recommendations for improvements to the existing BMI workshop. Although not every comment was totally positive, respondents considered the overall experience to be "worthwhile," "valuable,"

"helpful," and "beneficial." Two interviewees found it "enjoyable." The following comments confirm participant satisfaction with the workshop.

> I think it is very well balanced in terms of what is most important and least important. They are definitely hitting the crucial points and working very hard on it. Lesson content and presentation are the keys. I felt prepared for those two components of my job as a result of BMI.
>
> I felt good that they were going to give me some technical skills and an opportunity to learn classroom management.
>
> I think what they do has something for everybody. What I don't need, somebody else does; and what he doesn't need, I would. I think everything has its place.
>
> Overall, I think BMI is good. It is helpful. I would definitely recommend it to a new instructor.
>
> Overall, the BMI was a very heavy three weeks, but it was worth it.

Nevertheless, there are pockets of resistance to specific activities that participants were expected to be involved in, and dissatisfaction was expressed with the depth of coverage provided for particular topics. The teambuilding activities which were conducted with the entire group beginning on the second day of the workshop were generally denounced as "useless" because participants had the feeling of being "thrust into it" before they had had any opportunity to build relationships with group members. Moreover, they did not expect to have on-going "teammate" relationships with other workshop attendees because they were from all over the institute. As it was, a high level of discomfort pervaded the intimacies of the "trust walk" and the "Macarena," and feelings of being "shy" and "out of place" were exacerbated by being "forced to touch people you don't even know." The observation was made that if such teambuilding exercises were conducted with colleagues in their own program area, with whom they would eventually be functioning as teammates, it would make sense. Or, as was also

suggested, the teambuilding could take place within the small groups who spend considerable time together over the three weeks observing each other's presentations, providing feedback, and generally working as a "team" assisting one another to refine their presentation skills. A veritable barrage of negative comments about the teambuilding exercises bears a strong recommendation to the workshop organizers to identify, assess, and analyze the needs of new instructors in this domain before actually engaging them in any teambuilding situation. Tyler (1971) asserts that such needs must be determined in collaboration with the individual learner, learner groups, and their leaders.

Another recommendation voiced by many of the respondents relates to measurement of student performance. Generally, it was felt that this part of the program was lacking. "We had one session on classroom assessment techniques (CATs); I didn't even understand what the woman was talking about. To me that was a missing session." Another stated: "We spent four hours on the last day and that was it. To me, we should have spent a week doing CATs. The information we got about it was great, but we should have had time to practice it, and to really sit down and go through it, not just, 'oh, we forgot to do classroom assessment, let's do that in the last few hours.' And that's really how I felt it was being handled." Several respondents noted that the topic was covered "lightly," "received almost no time," was "a little short," or received "almost no emphasis." A couple of attendees don't recall any coverage of classroom assessment techniques or test-writing, but in admitting that, they hastily add that "...it's a lot to bite off in three weeks," and, "There is a real sense that people are overwhelmed

with what they have to remember," and "The CATs techniques are not where we are on day one."

There were two recommendations regarding how the classroom assessment techniques topic could have been handled: One idea was that it could have been incorporated into the ROPES presentations so that an "expert" would be on hand to demonstrate a CATs technique as part of the feedback when ROPES presentations were done in the small groups. Another suggestion was that this aspect of the workshop be deferred to a later date:

> Maybe...do content development before you go teaching, and then after you've had some time in the classroom come back and do evaluation.
>
> I am not comfortable with my skill level there (CATs), and BMI did not address that. They have a short period of time; they can't do everything at once, but maybe BMI could cover the stuff you need to know right now to get you into the classroom, then maybe do this on an ongoing basis.
>
> You know what they should do, perhaps near the end of your first year, is book you out of class for a couple of days, send you back into BMI and start some of the classroom assessment stuff. It will be a lot more relevant to us, we have been reading the students, etc.,... now we can talk about assessment and other things

As noted earlier, this recommendation is supported by adult learning theory ( Tyler, 1971 and Boone, 1985) relating to both *teachable moments* and *learning experiences*.

A third recommendation, which emerged as a major concern for those involved, focuses on the time at which the BMI workshop is offered. The inservice typically runs the first three weeks of August, leaving only one week for a new instructor to prepare for the semester. The worst-case scenario occurs in some technology programs that are seventeen weeks in length where the instructor finishes the BMI workshop on Friday afternoon and starts teaching the following Monday, "which is a very short time to get ourselves familiarized with a new school, new job and everything." As one instructor

put it, "That was devastating for me." Instructors stated that this situation causes extreme stress which in many cases lasts the entire year. Given this incredible time constraint, instructors see no way of implementing "all the wonderful stuff" they have learned in BMI. Said one: "...all new courses, all new lesson plans, and being comfortable in the classroom, I just had to survive." Another commented, "...in my first year, I was strung right out." A third observed, "I survived...because I had the full support of my family." "I can see how people burn themselves out," noted another instructor, "...I was basically a day ahead of my students, just making sure I had the information for my lecture, I focused all my energy on that." Suggestions for improving the scheduling of the workshop follow:

> To me the three weeks was well spent, it has good value; but it would have a lot better value if we could take it and spread it over six months...and be teaching at the same time. Something along the line of modularizing the BMI, offering it over a weekend or for two or three days at a time. Just offer it over a much wider time frame.
>
> It might be better to take some of the stuff...after the first year or even after the first six months; that would help a lot. I could weed out the more important information.
>
> I would definitely suggest that the timing could be improved a bit. They could start BMI earlier rather than towards the start of a new school year. If BMI were done a month earlier, and the new instructor has to develop new courses, it would give them some time to work on them. There was one course that I didn't know anything about...that was a very important item that I disliked was the time that the BMI was offered.
>
> I guess what I didn't like about it and what was a real downer is the fact that you get three weeks of this and then you only have a week to get everything ready for your courses. Maybe it would be best to give two inservices; just some of the basics and then maybe a follow-up in some advanced skills the following year. It's a lot to bite off in three weeks and then you pay the price because you haven't had a chance to implement it for your classes.
>
> Have more than one offering; deliver it at different times. Last year I finished up on Friday and started class on Monday. There was no time to do any prep.

Another major recommendation made by respondents centred around the diversity of programming at NAIT. There is a very strong opinion among some apprenticeship instructors that the BMI workshop as it is presently structured does not meet their needs on a couple of fronts. The most prevalent concern relates to the notion that in the apprenticeship programs, which run for eight weeks at a time, the ROPES method of instruction "just doesn't work." The reason given is that there is simply not enough time to prepare and deliver ROPES lessons for the "mounts of material" that are to be covered in eight weeks. Moreover, contend the apprenticeship instructors, much of the course content does not fit the ROPES formula because it is purely factual, not material that requires a "show-tell-do" presentation and an exercise for reinforcement. Apprenticeship instructors feel that they are being asked to fit a square peg into a round hole when they are required to adapt their course material to the ROPES method. Insisting that the BMI workshop "didn't show me what I was going to be facing in the apprenticeship program," they point to the "latest and greatest" technology that is presented in the workshop, accompanied by strong endorsements of the ROPES method (which some interpret as having it "pushed on us a little too strongly"). Apart from the ever-present tyranny of extremely tight time lines, which they maintain obstruct their ROPES lesson preparation, they note that some programs are badly lacking the computer hardware and software necessary to prepare and deliver "flashy little presentations for every class hour" using Powerpoint or some similar software. They also point to budget constraints under which color overheads (also "very strongly pushed" in the workshop) are totally prohibitive at $3 each. While these negative observations were voiced by some respondents, there are also apprenticeship instructors

who are working at preparing lessons using the ROPES method. Said one, "... it means an awful lot of preparation time on my part, but when I deliver it, it goes off as smooth as can be. The nice thing about it is it encourages students to ask questions, it gives the students 'hands on' right away...you can evaluate them right away...I think it provides for a richer lesson, but the main thing I find about ROPES is it keeps the instructor focused on what he has to teach."

Another perspective obtained during the interviews suggests that the BMI method is counter to the existing institute culture among instructors. Observing notable resistance to the BMI method by long-term program instructors who have been delivering lessons in the traditional lecture style, one instructor found that rather than encouraging the new arrivals to refine their presentation skills using the ROPES formula, some are "openly hostile" to the workshop method, and advise the newcomers that "it just doesn't work around here." The BMI aficionados, rather than alienate themselves from the program team, adopt the methods and styles espoused by the "local experts," and become defenders of the way things are done in the programs. "I think rather than having glitzy presentations, good classroom discussions and good communications between instructors and respect for the students is just as effective as dazzling them," observed one respondent. Apprenticeship instructors repeatedly suggested that during the BMI workshop separate small-group sessions should be held for them so that they could "get ideas from people who are teaching the same kinds of students." Contending that the "apprenticeship side of things...is totally different from the technology side," instructors in trades programs expressed the opinion that the BMI workshop does not mirror what happens in their programs, but it does reflect what "is going to happen in

one- and two-year programs." One instructor summed it up by saying, "It is good to have BMI, but I think it's more geared to the two-year programs, where we (apprenticeship) are an eight-week program. I think the BMI could be developed a little differently for apprenticeship training."

While the apprenticeship instructors were most vocal about the disparity between the "ideals" presented at BMI and "what actually goes on in the classroom," others voiced similar concerns about the amount of material they are expected to cover and their inability, because of the time constraints, to utilize ROPES on a continual basis. Said one instructor in a technology program, "There is no way I would have been able to cover the material that was there if I had done ROPES lessons every day."

It would seem that across the institute, every course is absolutely laden with totally necessary facts, processes, and procedures, none of which can be dispensed with (on the advice of program Advisory Committees), and many of which are adaptable to ROPES lessons but are not being delivered by that method because instructor workloads prevent their implementing the BMI model.

Other recommendations to improve the workshop included the following suggestions: (1) sessions on "technical" and "mechanical" procedures such as using an overhead projector, changing a bulb in a projector, effective use of whiteboards and flip charts, and advice about how to arrange classroom seating, where the instructor should stand, and other "practical" matters that would increase instructor comfort levels and promote student interest and attention. (2) hints or tips on how to motivate students when they are uninterested in a topic or being disruptive. These topics were covered in role-playing situations, but some participants felt they would have benefited from more

prescriptive guidance. (3) make sure that the workshop facilitators "know their audience" so that they are not "talking over the heads" of participants. Not everyone has "university English" and some "really felt left out when that happened."

## Interviews with Administrators

As noted in Chapter 3, Methodology, triangulation of data for this research was achieved by interviewing institute administrators at the program head level as well as workshop leaders. This section presents the opinions and perceptions of the BMI workshop as articulated by (1) two administrators (Program Heads) who have hired several new instructors over the past two years and whose duties include classroom instruction and direct supervision of instructors, (2) the workshop coordinator who has been involved with the BMI training for the past five years as a facilitator and a producer of workshop modules, and (3) a workshop facilitator who has a 15-year involvement with BMI, and who is also an assistant program head in an apprenticeship program with duties that include classroom instruction and direct supervision of instructors. Demographic data on these respondents is presented in Table 3.

The questions posed to these participants were constructed and piloted with careful attention to the purpose of the study: to determine the extent to which it is perceived that newly appointed instructors are effectively prepared for their role as a result of the training provided by the BMI workshop As in the previous section of this chapter which communicated findings of the interviews with instructors, the narrative provided here is organized according to the Interview Guide for Administrators

(Program Head) as described in Chapter 3 and shown in Appendix D, and will clearly state their views of the effectiveness of the workshop.

**Perceptions and Opinions of the Effectiveness of BMI**

A total of ten open-ended questions were prepared for these interviews. Carefully parallelling those asked of instructors, but adapted to capture the administrative perspective, the questions focused on the key themes of workshop content, follow-up, and recommendations.

Observing that the preparation of lesson plans is "very important" and "a major component" of the instructional role: "Every instructor is responsible for his or her own set of personal lesson plans and I think that's a highly personal thing...," both program heads felt that the most beneficial aspect of the BMI workshop is that new instructors come to their programs with a "framework," a "structure" for building lesson plans according to the ROPES method of delivery. Said one, "I think it's (ROPES) probably an excellent way, a framework we'll say, to build your lectures on." The other stated, "...delivering the lesson plans using the ROPES method is how we do it here...I certainly support that method of instructional delivery, and I encourage my instructors to do that."

Another "very important part of the instructor role," it was noted, is evaluating student performance by means of testing and other methods. According to one respondent, an apprenticeship program can expect to deal with approximately 900 students per year, so these are components of the job that the instructor is expected "to have a full understanding of."

Interpersonal communication and teambuilding skills were identified as a "really, really big part of being an instructor, no matter what program area..." The program heads agreed that the BMI workshop is effective in preparing new instructors for these major elements of their instructional role. "My perception is that it (BMI) works well, and it's a very necessary part of preparation for instruction," said one. "I think it's tremendous for them to have a trial run at classroom instruction and a little bit of peer consultation that goes with it." From the perspective of the program heads who were interviewed, the strengths of the BMI training are definitely believed to be: (1) teaching the ROPES method of instruction, (2) providing the practice teaching sessions, and (3) introducing teambuilding behaviours. These opinions concur with what instructors expressed on points (1) and (2); however, instructors in the apprenticeship programs were highly critical of the teambuilding component of the workshop. It should be noted that they were not objecting to the concept of teambuilding, but rather to the timing and nature of teambuilding activities arranged by workshop facilitators.

The program heads feel that the BMI workshop is "really significant" in helping new instructors survive their first year, "particularly for those who have no experience." "They have to have it, absolutely," observed one. Noting that he hears instructors describe the training as "high powered, intense, a tremendous amount of activity," the other called it "an essential component, as far as I'm concerned."

Administrators feel that two kinds of follow-up to the BMI workshop are essential to the effectiveness of new instructors. The first, and possibly the most critical, is follow-up in the form of assistance and mentoring that new instructors receive from both their program administrators and fellow instructors. Both program heads are

keenly aware of their responsibility to help the newcomers settle in and find their way around, to provide them with whatever materials and supplies they need to get started, and to ensure that they are "connected" with an instructor who can help them through their first teaching assignment. Noting that "whenever possible"new instructors in their programs are given an opportunity to audit classes before they begin instructing, the interviewees also pointed out that new instructor assignments will likely be courses in the first year of the program, "basic stuff and lots of shops," which are "generally a little easier to get going in terms of skill requirements and so on." Moreover, observed one, "You can't give a new instructor a brand new course to teach. There's no way I would ever do that, no way." One program head described the team approach to instructing that is employed in his program where three instructors share equally the theory, shop, and math components of an eight-week apprenticeship session. If a new instructor is a member of the team, he/she is assigned the "easier lectures," is provided with the lesson plans, and is coached along. This type of encouragement, support, and mentoring was identified by instructors as extremely important during the first year; however, a couple of interviewees admitted that they had received no mentoring whatsoever, and very little support from colleagues in their programs. Among the instructors interviewed for this research were three whose supervisor is one of the program head interviewees. Worth noting is the similarity between instructor and administrator testimonies regarding the kind of support and mentoring that characterize orientation of new instructors in that particular program.

The second kind of follow-up deemed by administrators to be very significant in enhancing instructor effectiveness would be a three-way partnership involving the new

instructor, the BMI workshop facilitator (or someone from Human Resources who has the necessary expertise), and the program head. Hastening to clarify the objective of this exercise, the proponent stated his belief that it would be a valid way to provide formative evaluation of the instructor, to identify gaps in the BMI training, and to give the program head a better opportunity to identify and implement remedial action when necessary. Recognizing that the process would need fine tuning, he suggested that a combination of classroom observation, discussion about response to the *Student Feedback on Instruction*, and instructor opinions about their own strengths and struggles would undoubtedly lead to useful dialogue. The key element, he feels, would be structure - setting dates, times, places, and defining procedures so that the follow-up is part of the orientation process for a newly appointed instructor.

The administrators, while sharing generally positive perceptions about the BMI workshop, were able to offer recommendations for improvement. As suggested by instructors in response to the same question, the timing of the workshop is seen as a target for improvement. It should be offered earlier so as not to run so close to semester start-up, or it should be modularized and presented in two-day sessions, for example, over the entire semester.

Another recommendation which echoes the sentiments of instructor interviewees relates to the content of the workshop. It should have a stronger "practical, mechanical" component which includes orientation to "the processes that are standard across the institute (for ordering photocopies, audio-visual material, and other supplies, for example) In the same vein, it is felt that newly appointed instructors should spend at least one full day with their program head before beginning the workshop instead of the

present two-hour "meet and greet" session. Spending time in their own program setup, being given their instructional assignments, being made aware of resources within the program - these are believed to be ways in which the new instructor could be helped to prepare for the BMI workshop. Right now, suggested one program head, "They are playing at putting together a presentation because they are not dealing with the material that they are actually going to be delivering." The perception is that the stress and anxiety that new instructors feel over the practice teaching component of the workshop as well as over their upcoming debut classroom performance would be diminished if they could be preparing lessons that they will actually use in their instructional role.

Another recommendation is that the BMI workshop have seasoned "master" instructors from around the institute actually prepare a ROPES lesson and deliver it, either live or on videotape. Noting that "the only people they get to observe in the BMI are new instructors like themselves," the program head who made this observation suggests that new instructors could benefit greatly from an experience that would "give them something to aim for; they can see what works well." Adding that he would be willing to participate in the creation of a such a video, this program head feels that "some way of auditing" a class that they will actually teach is a real need for new instructors.

Recommendations were also made relating to allocation of resources to the BMI workshop. Believing that workshop facilitators are "spread way too thin during the BMI," one program head suggested that there should be "a lot more resource availability" enabling participants to have greater interaction with the facilitators when they are preparing lesson plans, etc. A suggestion was also made that the workshop component introducing new instructors to Powerpoint and other computer programs is

"just enough to tease them." Giving a new instructor the impression that he/she will walk into an office environment that is fully equipped with the latest technology and practice the great stuff they have been exposed to is a far cry from the reality of many programs at the institute where what they are more likely to find is badly outdated equipment (provided they even have computers for instructors at all).

In summary, the program administrators perceive that the BMI workshop is definitely an effective way of preparing new instructors for their teaching role; however, there are components of the training that could use fine tuning.

## Interview with Workshop Facilitator

Ten questions were asked during the interview with a workshop facilitator. These, like the questions asked of the administrators, were crafted to elicit the facilitator's perceptions of the effectiveness of the workshop. The narrative following is organized according to the Interview Guide for Workshop Facilitator as discussed in Chapter 3 and shown in Appendix E. The facilitator's fifteen-year involvement with the workshop in the capacity of a small group leader has contributed to the richness of his experiences with BMI and enables him to share the deep insights that derive from such a lengthy association.

### Perceptions and Opinions of the Effectiveness of BMI

The first two observations made by the respondent about the workshop are (1) "It's a very intense three weeks. It is really, really threatening to even the best

participants (those who have some experience) when they see what we need to work through in the three weeks, even they become somewhat frightened by it." (2) "I think it's a good program; I think it's an **excellent** program...I think it gives a new instructor who has just come in from industry...an idea of what it's going to be like in front of a group of students. I think it is a tremendous self-concept builder, an ego buildier...by the end of it they come away having the knowledge that they can do this—they can develop a lesson, they can get up in front of a group and present it and survive...and it gives them some excellent skills, tools, and knowledge that they can go into a classroom and survive."

Believing that the workshop "prepares new instructors very well," the facilitator points to the course development, lesson plan (ROPES) development, and "people skills" development as the most beneficial aspects of the training. He is aware of the resistance by some instructors to the teambuilding component but is convinced that it should be retained in the workshop because "...they can benefit from those teambuilding skills personally—they can grow personally...and apply these concepts to their classroom setting and to their relationships in their own office bank."

He is also very aware of the "opinion of many trades instructors that we don't have time to prepare ROPES lesson plans," and he agrees that the "phenomenal" amount of material to be covered in the eight-weeks is daunting He believes that instructor defensiveness of their negative stance regarding ROPES stems from an "all or nothing" approach, "we have to present every lesson in a ROPES way." When they see that they cannot manage that, "they throw up a wall and they don't do any of it." The workshop facilitator, as an instructor in an apprenticeship program and a proponent of the ROPES

method as "one of the best ways to present," suggests a strategy for dealing with this dilemma that he feels "has worked." His approach is to separate the course content into three segments: (1) material that is factual like codes and such, "really easy," (2) concepts that are moderately difficult, and (3) topics or concepts that are very difficult. He assigns for home reading and study the "easy" material, following it up with a take-home assignment that is turned in for marks "so I know that they have done it." He makes it clear to the students that "this is the information that you are responsible for, this is the stuff that you...can learn on your own." Secondly, he prepares ROPES lesson plans (modified in some cases to fit the tight time lines) for the somewhat and very difficult topics, and that's what classroom time is spent on. He also advocates building ROPES lesson plans that may incorporate three or four of the five steps if they can't all be fitted in, and is convinced that there is definite merit to this design. The challenge, he acknowledges, is to get instructors to "understand that concept...[then] they wouldn't be so defensive."

On the issue of follow-up to the BMI workshop, this respondent acknowledges the "staged" characteristic of the present process where a facilitator from the workshop comes to a class and observes a new instructor presenting a ROPES lesson; but he maintains, nevertheless, that there is value in this procedure. He noted that "something such as you are doing" (interviewing) participants six months or a year after the workshop would be a good form of follow-up. Expanding on that theme, he suggested that the staff training department could hold focus group sessions at intervals throughout the first year following the workshop and ask questions such as those being asked in this research.

Responding to the assertion by apprenticeship instructors that the small groups in the workshop needed to be homogenous, e.g. composed of all apprenticeship instructors or all business instructors, the workshop facilitator conceded that there might be "some relevance" to this setup. He observed, however, that if this were the case, then the facilitator of that small group would need to have the same background as group members. The intent of the practice teaching sessions which are a key activity of the small groups, he noted, is not necessarily to give new instructors a chance to practice teaching their particular course; it is designed to provide them with a method, a process to follow when delivering a lesson about any topic. "The content is irrelevant," he stated, "it's the process that we need to learn and the new instructor needs to learn. The content is a side issue...and it doesn't matter whether it's eight weeks or two years...it's the process that we are concentrating on."

The facilitator agrees with perceptions of both instructors and program heads that the test-writing, and classroom assessment components of the workshop are "a bit weak." As do the instructors and program heads, the facilitator also suggests that perhaps the most propitious time to deliver instruction on these topics is not during the BMI training, but in "two-day workshop sessions at various times throughout the semester." Two solid reasons for supporting this approach, he believes, are (1) it would take some of the pressure off beleagured newly appointed instructors during the "crammed" three-week sessions, and (2) it would make good andragogical sense to deliver instruction on topics such as test writing, not when instructors are stressed about delivering lessons for the first time, but later in the semester when they are turning their

attention to student evaluation, and just-in-time training on a topic with immediate relevance is more likely to be well received.

The facilitator offered a couple of suggestions for improvements to the BMI workshop. Noting that the manual currently in use is "probably five or more years old...and we are doing things a bit differently from what's in the book," he feels that it is necessary to "rewrite the manual to make it more relevant to what we are doing today." Another recommendation, similar to that expressed by both instructors and administrators, is to teach specific components (such as ROPES) during the three-week workshop before new instructors enter the classroom; then offer several two- or three-day seminars on topics such as teambuilding, classroom assessment, test writing, and possibly other needs that would be identified by instructors in the revised follow-up process. He suggested furthermore, that the on-going short seminars could be designed to attract "seasoned instructors" who should be reinforcing and refining their instructional skills. He observed that apart from "a few technical seminars here or there to upgrade and maintain their technical skills...so many instructors, once they are into the classroom can be there for ten or twenty years and have never done anything to develop professionally." A viewpoint held by some instructors is that they must attend inservice and take university courses to "move across on the salary scale" but the idea that they might become more insightful or effective practitioners of adult education as a result of attendance at such courses is greeted with "real animosity." He also commented: "When I first started here...we were really encouraged to go out and get a university degree and a lot of us did that." He cites instances where 30 or 40 instructors would be taking university classes that were offered on site—the result of institute efforts to "make it

easier for us to get courses." He concludes: "From my perspective, I don't see that the institute is encouraging instructors to go out and get a degree, and get some formal education in that sense. That's an issue that also needs to be dealt with."

In summary, the workshop facilitator believes that the BMI workshop is an effective way to prepare newly appointed instructors for their instructional role. Acknowledging that the strength of the workshop is clearly in its approach to lesson development and presentation (ROPES), he identifies areas that are in need of improvement; however, "for those instructors who are brand new out of industry, haven't ever presented to a group, haven't ever taught before, and are quite in awe as to what this new career is that they are getting in to, ...I think it's an excellent survival tool."

## Interview with Workshop Coordinator

The coordinator of the BMI workshop is responsible for ensuring the overall implementation of the project. Soliciting opinions regarding content, procuring group leaders, planning and scheduling sessions, managing the various components of the project, delivering lectures on specific topics, and troubleshooting throughout the three weeks are some of the tasks that the coordinator undertakes as part of the role.

In an interview with the workshop coordinator, his impressions about the effectiveness of BMI were solicited by means of eight open-ended questions that concentrated, as did those asked of other respondents, on the key components of the training. A lengthy history in instruction, administration, and coordination roles has

contributed to the firm opinions held by the interviewee about the current workshop, as well as about the strengths and deficiencies in present institute practice relating to professional development of academic staff. As in the previous sections of this chapter which conveyed findings of the interviews with other respondents, the discourse following is organized according to the Interview Guide for Workshop Coordinator as described in Chapter 3, and shown in Appendix F.

## Perceptions and Opinions of the Effectiveness of BMI

The workshop coordinator believes that the most significant impact BMI has on new instructors is "that they can leave with confidence in their ability to deliver a lesson and competence in an approach (ROPES) which enables them to be effective." Observing that at the outset of the workshop, "they are quite frightened, the majority of them," the coordinator sees a vast change between the quality of their initial presentations and "what we see over the next three weeks." Admitting that he is not sure about the effectiveness of every dimension of the workshop training, he reflects that, "At the very least, they could prepare and deliver a lesson quite effectively." He believes that were it not for the workshop, new instructors would "struggle initially much more than they do." Citing his own observations of instructors who have been on the job for a semester or even a year before taking the workshop, he sees that while they are "much more comfortable standing and presenting," he remarks that the quality of their presentations is subject to wide variability. He believes this is because prior to being trained in the ROPES method of presenting, they do not have a "systematic approach" to preparing a lesson that will ensure a consistently "positive experience for

learners." "Their delivery method is all over the map," he notes, and he cites anecdotes from instructors who declare that "they really struggle without the process that ROPES provides for them."

On the question of follow-up to the three-week training, the coordinator feels that there are three mechanisms that would provide fuller coverage than is now existing. The classroom observation component which is currently in place occurs during the first year, and while he feels that it is a useful vehicle for providing feedback to the new instructors, it often doesn't take place until late in the second semester by which time its value in providing formative feedback is almost completely lost. So, his first suggestion is that the classroom observations be carried out as soon as possible after the workshop—definitely during the first semester when recommendations for improving lesson preparation and delivery can be offered early enough to be incorporated into future lesson plans and practiced throughout the year.

His second recommendation for follow-up, which has been suggested by all other interviewees, is that blocks of time be set aside on a monthly basis over the first year for all workshop participants to attend seminars on additional topics, or subjects that are not fully covered in the present program. The workshop coordinator feels that such a venture would establish the support network new instructors need to answer their questions, solve problems, and generally deepen their understanding of andragogical theory. He notes that moral support is often strong within programs and new instructors generally get sufficient encouragement from their colleagues; but sometimes their greatest need is for instruction in a particular technique for which they need advice and coaching from an expert. "Our real desire," he states, "is to keep them together so that

they will consider their first year of employment as an orientation." He believes that BMI needs a "more prolonged process which should...help us provide some really good feedback to the program supervisors that says, 'this person has got it'." He recognizes that there would be barriers to implementing such a scheme: time, of course, and agreement from the institute which would need to allocate resources. A new program utilizing educational technology which will provide training for faculty in a total of 26 modules ranging from awareness to advanced authorware tools is being piloted at the institute this fall This innovation, (the result of collaboration with eleven colleges across Alberta) will see BMI participants follow through with training on ten core modules with a view to having them eventually complete all 26 and receive certification.

The third recommendation made by the workshop coordinator for improved follow-up is a peer consultation program. Within a cluster of programs or within the program itself, he envisions an instructor who would formally take on the role of mentor/coach of a new instructor for one year. The mentor would be a "real advocate of BMI," someone who had gone through the training within the past three to four years "so they are still attuned to it." There would be reward/recognition for the assignment which would require implementing peer consultation tools. The duties would include regular meetings with the new instructor, classroom observations, and "ongoing formative feedback and support for the new instructor." The coordinator believes that implementation of those three steps would ensure solid support for and evaluation of newly appointed instructors.

Regarding administration perceptions of the BMI workshop, the coordinator believes support "is mixed" right now, but he feels that increasing numbers of deans as

well as program heads "are speaking quite positively" about the training. Admitting that he has no hard data to support his contention, he "has a sense...that the new instructional staff are reasonably solid performers in the classroom"—an outcome that he credits to the new approach by BMI to place a stronger emphasis on adult learning theory, learning styles, and a systematic delivery method. There is, among certain administrators at the institute, a strong conviction that the primary criteria for hiring instructors is a high degree of technical expertise in their content areas, so much so that some program heads will take a person with weak interpersonal, supervisory, or organizational skills if they possess impressive occupational credentials. A rising tide of resistance to this mindset is building because of problems associated with instructor deficiencies in those soft skills. Clearly, the ideal candidate will possess a good measure of both; however, the newly appointed instructor who arrives for BMI training without a predisposition towards certain attitudes about learning and adult learners will most certainly struggle, if not ultimately fail, or at the very least function ineffectively, as an instructor. Brookfield (1985) quotes Apps (1981), Stephens and Roderick (1971) and Heath (1980) in defining "exemplary instructor characteristics derived from a review of humanistic psychology"(p.133). He says:

> Thus, exemplary instructors are concerned about learners, are knowledgeable in their subject, relate theory to practice and their field to other fields, appear confident, are open to different approaches, present an authentic personality in the class, are willing to go beyond class objectives, and are able to create a good atmosphere for learning.

Moreover, he observes that "teachers of adults..like people and act intelligently toward them; they are courteous, good humoured, tactful, fair, energetic, articulate, imaginative, and adaptable." (p.133) The BMI workshop in its present format can train potential

instructors in the technical skills required to prepare and present an effective lesson, it can introduce basic andragogical principles in abbreviated form, and it can provide snapshots of instructional activities such as test-writing, classroom assessment techniques, and classroom management; but it cannot hope to do more than that in three weeks. It is needful that program and institute administrators commit very strongly to supporting professional development for instructional staff, not only during the BMI workshop, but throughout their tenure at the institute.

The workshop coordinator agrees with the opinion of instructors that the test-writing and evaluation components of BMI are at present "a lower priority." Identifying the greatest need of newly appointed instructors as "the confidence to stand and present an effective lesson," he says that the BMI workshop provides "the process that will allow that to occur." Outside of this very basic objective, he notes, are the attempts to "open people's eyes... to the other things...critical thinking, cooperative learning, creativity... that will enhance the ROPES method." Strategies have been identified to address the shortcoming in this year's workshop, he noted; and in the long term, the plan to extend BMI training over a full year will provide a much better opportunity to address topics such as test writing and classroom assessment when more time is allocated to them. Furthermore, instructors will be more receptive to the material when it is the central focus of the seminar, rather than peripheral matter as it is seen to be during the intense workshop.

A characteristic of the workshop of which trades instructors are critical is the composition of the small groups. Currently comprised of a cross-section of instructors from a variety of schools and programs across the institute, the groups would be more

effective, suggested the respondents, if they were homogenous—consisting of instructors from a particular instructional milieu. It should be noted here that this suggestion came repeatedly from apprenticeship instructors whose rationale for limiting the mix is that the apprenticeship courses are so vastly different from the two-year programs that instructors experience real difficulty relating the methods taught in BMI to their actual teaching assignments. Interacting with others from similar programs would, they believe, deepen their insights and provide an opportunity for them to learn different techniques that they are certain would fit their unique instructional environment. The workshop coordinator commented on the present practice, noting that having different program areas (such as engineering, technologies, trades, business, etc.,) represented throughout the small groups was an intentional decision. "The philosophy behind that was to expose people to different approaches...and that will broaden their horizons." The second reason he gives is that, "...we need to have staff that have a sense of the entire organization, and if they narrow it to the apprenticeship side, they only see that dimension..." He believes it is possible to address the angst of apprenticeship instructors who feel the workshop is not addressing their instructional realities by "providing an opportunity for them to present to one another;" nevertheless, he feels that as an educational institute we have a responsibility to present "alternate ways of doing things." He believes that the whole area of methods of delivering instruction is ripe for a major review and overhaul. New and continuing developments in instructional technology, the "new breed" of students who see themselves as customers and expect high levels of satisfaction for their education dollars, the ever-rising levels of education that students possess upon entering technical institutes, the "entrepreneurial" thrust of post-secondary

education where government funding is linked to KPI indicators and revenue-generating programming - these are some of the factors that are currently affecting decisions on instructional methods in our structured educational environments, and their impact will continue to be felt as educators experience increased pressure to shift with whatever professional wind is blowing at the time or submit to the dictates of political officeholders who attempt to use them (us) to achieve whatever ends they deem desirable. It will be important for adult educators to have a clear and observable rationale of professional practice so that they will be taken seriously and included as active participants in deciding future educational directions. This will necessitate a different approach to human resource development within educational institutions, an approach that will be reflected in increased investment in faculty training programs and a recognition that professional preparation and in-service development will be lifelong pursuits.

## Summary

This chapter has presented the findings of the structured interviews conducted with faculty at a post-secondary technical institute for the purpose of determining their perceptions of the effectiveness of the instructor preparation workshop offered to newly appointed instructors. The 17 instructors, 2 administrators, 1 workshop facilitator, and 1 workshop coordinator who participated in the study were unanimous in their perception that the three-week training is a necessary and effective means of providing minimal preparation for instructional roles. On-going professional development of faculty is

deemed highly desirable in this educational setting where instructor profiles encompass a wide range of technical, occupational, and professional backgrounds.

# CHAPTER V

# CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study and presents conclusions drawn by the researcher. Implications of the conclusions, particularly for those involved in professional development planning at the institute where this study was done are discussed. Recommendations for future and further research conclude the chapter.

The summary and conclusions presented here will be organized according to the sub-questions that guided the research. Four of these sub-questions relate to instructor perceptions regarding the key content areas of the workshop: course planning and development; lesson planning and development; presentation of lesson material using the ROPES method of instruction; and interpersonal communications with students. The final sub-question focuses on the perceptions of institute administrators around the effectiveness of the BMI workshop.

## Course Planning and Development—Sub-Question #1

Sub-question #1 asked: How do instructors perceive their course development skills? Do they feel competent to develop a course in their specialty area within prescribed guidelines?

**Conclusion: Instructors perceive that as a result of taking the BMI workshop, they are capable of developing the content for a course in their specialty area within**

**the prescribed guidelines.**

**Summary of Findings**

In very few cases are new instructors expected to develop a course "from scratch." Generally, they are assigned to teach an established course, one that forms part of the present curriculum with course outlines, exams, resources, and support material already in place. Instructors noted that for the "first time through," they do not make many changes, preferring to follow the existing course outline but making minor adjustments here and there while noting what they would like to do differently in the future. Occasionally, new instructors are hired because their occupational expertise is required either to provide guidance for development of a course that has been added to the curriculum of an existing program, or to help launch a totally new program. The ability to take a large body of information (such as a course in geophysics) and arrange it into sequential, manageable parts enables instructors who find themselves in development roles to see the whole picture and to envision the relationship between various parts of the course content—a skill that is essential for developing achievement-based objectives and lesson content. Of the instructors interviewed for this study, two had undertaken major course development tasks when they were appointed, and they said the workshop activity on this component, coupled with the manual which they retain for reference, provided excellent guidance to lead them through the steps of building a course outline that defines units, topics, sub-topics, and a time schedule for a course. While it is understood that the BMI workshop module on course development could be supplemented by further studies on this topic, instructors feel they can effectively develop course content.

A major concern of respondents surrounding the issue of course development, however,

is that current instructional assignments allow almost no time for such undertakings, and diminished resouces make it unlikely that workloads will be adjusted to free instructors for extensive development activities. Another observation from participants in this research is that courses in some program areas are badly in need of updating and revising, but present deficiencies in equipment and technology would obstruct implementation of new methods and techniques.

**Implications**

The expertise in course development that instructors acquire during the workshop, when coupled with their specific skills or knowledge in a particular field or subject area has implications for both instructors and students. Designing courses that are complete because they have carefully incorporated all the aspects of planning and delivering produces a reliable foundation for the adult educator to build on. This ensures the safety of the instructor, which, in adult learning, is as important as the safety of the student. When course design is appropriate because it is based on proven principles and practices, instructors approach their teaching duties with confidence and students respond as they discover that the design works for the achievement of required skills.

At the institute where this study was done, the design, structure, content, and timing of courses offered are the result of dialogue and collaboration between external stakeholders such as the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Branch and program Advisory Committees on the one hand and institute development teams on the other. The roles include safeguarding the integrity of discipline concepts and ensuring that training approaches honour the principles of andragogy. An expert resource person with dual abilities to address course design issues and represent the discipline can be a valuable member of a development team. The impact on program budgets through savings on the cost of paying external consultants is also an implication of having skilled

course content developers among institute faculty.

## Lesson Development and Delivery—Sub-Questions #2 and #3

Without a doubt, the most significant, demanding, and time-consuming component of the instructors' role is preparing lesson plans and delivering them in classroom, lab, and shop settings. For this reason, two sub-questions (#2 and #3) guiding the research are related to this aspect of the BMI training. Conclusions for each sub-question are presented separately; but because the topics are so closely related, implications for both are described in one section.

Sub-question #2: How do instructors perceive their lesson planning abilities? Do they feel competent to prepare lesson plans that define the major steps, sub-steps, and support knowledge necessary to enable students to reach the instructional objectives of the course?

**Conclusion: Instructors perceive that they are competent in the preparation of lesson plans that enable students to meet the instructional objectives of the course.**

**Summary of Findings**

This module of the BMI workshop provides instructors with four steps for developing lesson plans, leads them through objective-writing exercises, and teaches them how to develop the support knowledge and content steps to reach the objective. Both instructors and administrators believe that BMI is effective because it provides a "framework," a "structure" on which to build lesson plans. Also very beneficial, they note, is the fact that they are working with topics from their areas of expertise, so they have a comfort level with the material and are able to concentrate on building the lesson plan. An interesting observation about this aspect of the BMI training is

that participants with Bachelor of Education degrees (three were interviewed) felt that they were better prepared for the lesson planning component of their role because of the approach they learned in the workshop.

There was considerable discussion about the objective-writing component of lesson preparation among apprenticeship instructors who do not compose objectives themselves. For each course in each eight-week apprenticeship offering, instructional objectives are prescribed by the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Branch of Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development. Instructors are required to build the lesson plans developing the steps and sub-steps to achieve the objective, but they do not determine the objectives.

Sub-question #3: How do instructors perceive their abilities to prepare and deliver an effective presentation following the "ROPES" (Review, Overview, Presentation, Exercise, Summary) method?

**Conclusion:** **Instructors perceive that they are effective in preparing and presenting lesson content utilizing the "ROPES" method of delivery; however, instructional loads, curriculum content, and course schedules render utilization of ROPES on a continual basis impossible.**

**Summary of Findings**

Interview responses indicate a very high level of satisfaction with this component of the BMI workshop which employs a two-part process: (1) actually preparing lessons following the ROPES format, and (2) delivering the lessons to a group of peers who provide immediate feedback. The ROPES method of lesson preparation is described as "very valuable," "the most useful thing I've done," "a good basic formula," and "a great tool for a starting instructor."

Instructors say they have a focus, they feel organized, and they have more confidence when they know they will be delivering a well-prepared ROPES lesson. The second step in the process—the practice teaching sessions—caused much stress and anxiety among participants; nevertheless, they were deemed to be "very beneficial," "the most useful, practical thing," and "a real confidence builder." Instructors felt that the opportunity to actually practice delivering a lesson was the best preparation they could have had for what they will be doing in the classroom. They valued the peer feedback, they felt supported and encouraged by the workshop leaders throughout their sessions, and they came away "believing that they had the skills to survive." Comments about increased awareness and self-confidence, and about the camaraderie of sharing the experience with others who "are in the same boat" leave no doubt that instructors learned from and valued this feature of BMI. The three most positive outcomes of the practice teaching sessions, as perceived by interview respondents, were that it: (1) improved teaching performance, (2) sharpened presentation skills, and (3) generated a spirit of professional collegiality among attendees.

A major drawback to this highly desirable method of delivering a clearly organized, well prepared lesson that virtually guarantees student understanding of the topic is that instructors have found the preparation time for each one-hour ROPES lesson to be anywhere from three to six or seven hours, depending on the complexity of the subject. Moreover, delivery of a lesson that incorporates all five steps as prescribed by ROPES takes so much class time that course content would need to be cut in half if each topic were presented this way. Frustration over this dilemma was evident during interviews with instructors from all program areas, and mild hostility towards workshop facilitators who are perceived as "pushing the ROPES method" was expressed

by instructors in apprenticeship programs who feel that ROPES "just doesn't work" in the eight-week delivery format of apprenticeship training. Although all instructors voiced concerns about the time constraints inherent in preparing and presenting ROPES lessons, most are attempting to follow the ROPES plan but admit that application of this preferred method is sporadic at best, and in some cases non-existent in their programs.

**Implications**

This portion of the BMI training had a strong positive impact and left a lasting impression on workshop participants. Implications of this are that in the future, instructors will be inclined to participate in workshops or training sessions of this nature in anticipation of other instructional needs being met. Professional development planners at the institute can expect that positive training experiences will lead to increased participation in in-service education, an outcome that is highly desirable because of the dual opportunities it provides: (1) for new instructors to receive further training and (2) for seasoned instructors to share their professional expertise by facilitating BMI or in-service workshops. Utilizing a pool of "in-house" presenters and leaders at professional development activities could increase morale and job satisfaction among long-term instructional staff, while contributing to their continued professional growth. It could also stretch slim budgets and respond to time-sensitive needs allowing for expanded offerings and more frequent "just-in-time" sessions. The spirit of collegiality experienced during the workshop could promote the formation of an institute-wide network of peer counsellors who would mentor newly appointed instructors and provide valuable follow-up to BMI.

The conclusion that implementation of ROPES on a continual basis is impossible could prove to be demotivating to instructors and detrimental to student success over a period of time.

Newly appointed faculty who discover they are unable to implement the highly acclaimed instructional method they have struggled to perfect could experience frustration and demotivation to the point of disillusionment not only with the merits of the workshop, but also with the entire administration who could be seen as either oblivious to or accepting of the barriers which hinder the most effective instruction. Equally serious could be the impact on students who find that overloaded courses, hasty lectures, insufficient practice time, and instructor burn-out are not conducive to optimum learning and are inconsistent with institute claims of providing "quality career education."

## Classroom/Learning Environment—Sub-Question #4

Sub-question #4: How do instructors perceive their interpersonal abilities when dealing with students? Do they feel competent to engage in active listening skills and to give and receive constructive feedback and constructive criticism in an instructional setting?

**Conclusion** **Instructors perceive that they are competent to interact positively with students in learning situations; however, some of those interviewed do not credit the BMI workshop with enhancing their skills in this area, and some believe that elements of the interpersonal skills training were unnecessary and irrelevant.**

**Summary of Findings**

This component of the workshop addresses instructor interpersonal skills related to classroom management and giving feedback to students as well as being open to student opinions.

Perceptions of how adequately this component met its objective were just about equally divided with 14 positive and 13 negative comments. An interesting observation is that over half the negative comments came from instructors in trades programs; whose opinions ranged from, "it was common sense," to "there was no benefit at all as far as I was concerned." It should be noted that these comments referred directly to the role-playing and exploration kinds of activities—"touchy-feely stuff"—which trades instructors felt did not fit their instructional milieu; whereas sessions on questioning and listening techniques and on being aware of students' body language were viewed as very helpful and worthwhile.

The paucity of reaction to what comprised essentially one full day (8.75 hours) of the 14-day workshop coupled with expressed opinions about the value of other sessions suggests that instructors do not perceive a need for the interpersonal aspects of this training. Having not yet accepted their membership in a group whose responsibilities include being change agents for the behaviours of others, some instructors do not see particular workshop activities as appropriate to their new situation. Johnson and Johnson (1991), in a summary of Kurt Lewin's principles of adult learning state that it takes more than information to change ideas, attitudes, and behavioural patterns; they conclude that, "people will believe more in knowledge they have discovered themselves than in knowledge presented by others"(p.22). Brookfield (1985) makes the following observations: "As adult learners, these individuals [teachers] have clear ideas about what are the crucial problems, concerns, and issues in their own professional lives. Unless staff development efforts build upon these perceptions, feelings, and experiences, such efforts will be seen as irrelevant ways of taking up an hour or so of work time"(p.250). For workshop participants who have yet to experience their first teacher/learner interactions, role definitions for every aspect of the job are still to be solidified. They are acutely aware of their need to effectively prepare and

present lessons, but somewhat less convinced that they need to practice and refine interpersonal skills.

**Implications**

This mindset among attendees regarding the effectiveness of the BMI workshop to address both felt and perceived needs has implications for the design of the in-service program. Comments from apprenticeship instructors indicate that they believe workshop leaders do not have accurate knowledge of the conditions prevailing in their unique environment; therefore, techniques and activities learned at BMI are not being incorporated into instructional practice in apprenticeship programs. Widespread belief that the workshop in its present form is ineffective because of irrelevant content could cause a decline in support by administrators at the program head and dean levels. Convinced that the time of newly appointed instructors would be more profitably spent learning methods and techniques tailored to specific program needs, they could raise doubts and concerns about the value of the workshop that could jeopardize its existence.

## Administrators' Perceptions of Instructor Preparedness—Sub-Question #5

Sub-question #5: How do administrators at the program head level, as well as the workshop coordinator and the workshop facilitator perceive that instructors' abilities in course development, lesson planning and delivery, and interpersonal communication are influenced by participating in the BMI workshop?

**Conclusion** **Administrators at the program head level, as well as the workshop coordinator and the workshop facilitator perceive that the BMI workshop is effective in providing initial training for newly appointed instructors;**

**however, they agree unanimously that improvements are needed in the structure and content of the workshop.**

**Summary of Findings**

The two administrators who are program heads concurred with instructors who observed that the scheduling of the BMI workshop does not allow a new instructor much, if any, time to prepare for teaching assignments. Moreover, they believe that current follow-up to the workshop is inadequate and needs restructuring. A suggestion was made that the follow-up process could be vastly improved by adopting a partnership approach where the new instructor is mentored by and works with a workshop facilitator and the program head during his/her orientation year. The follow-up would be a highly structured activity with pre-determined topics covered at specific times so that formative evaluation can be provided to the instructor and remedial action implemented when necessary.

The workshop facilitator and the workshop coordinator also agree that present follow-up procedures are in need of an overhaul. The workshop coordinator proposed a comprehensive follow-up plan that would encompass classroom observations, additional seminars and sessions throughout the first year, and a peer consultation program.

All four administrators agree that the test-writing and classroom assessment components of the present workshop are weak. There is consensus among them as among instructors that these topics would be more positively received and would undoubtedly have greater value to workshop participants if they were offered later in the semester as a one- or two-day seminar.

**Implications**

The perception of institute administrators that the BMI workshop, although effective in meeting minimal needs of newly appointed instructors, is in need of revision has implications for

faculty development programs at NAIT including such activities as the BMI workshop. A macro plan for human resource development that would oversee the provision of timely, relevant, and appropriate training with opportunities for immediate application could begin to address the needs. The supervisory, staff development, and evaluation/accountability management processes and practices of the institute could either facilitate or hamper both the planning effort and the implementation of such a plan. A critical element of such a planning process, therefore, would be collaboration of all who would be affected by it.

## Recommendations

**Recommendation #1**: *Instructional assignments must carefully consider the element of course development that comprises a particular load.*

A totally new course, or one that has been extensively revised will require much more preparation time than a course that is essentially the same as it was the previous year. Institute resources which include experts in the areas of instructional design can be made available to provide guidance and support when course development is required. Given that the instructor is the content expert, s/he should expect to have sufficient time to work with curriculum consultants to design and organize learning activities that will utilize appropriate and effective instructional approaches.

**Recommendation #2**: *Up-to-date equipment and technology must be made available to all instructors so that lesson planning and delivery can reflect prevailing modes of instructional technology.*

Computers with capabilities to support advanced and enhanced software and instructional technology such as Powerpoint® are presently not available to all instructors. Nor does every program area have access to data projectors, the SmartBoard®, or similar innovations. Consequently, among individual instructors in any given program, there can and often does exist considerable variance in the quality of presentation materials. Even greater discrepancies have been detected among technology groups institute-wide. It appears that at present, an individual or program approach to technology integration and utilization is the norm as opposed to a more desirable global policy that would support and sustain the use of technology in instruction.

**Recommendation #3**: *Institute administrators at the executive, dean, and program leader levels must advocate and actively support training for and utilization of information technology that will upgrade and enhance instructor performance.*

The Organizational Services Division which is responsible for faculty training and development has a plan to provide training in instructional technology for all staff. The project which comprises 26 modules ranging from awareness to advanced authorwareing would see ten core modules delivered right away so that everyone has a set of basic skills. The intent is to offer all 26 modules so that instructional staff and others who desire to can acquire a certificate in educational technology. This initiative will need to incorporate a mechanism to recognize the hours required to complete the training with provision for the time forming part of instructor workloads. Full commitment and support on the part of institute administrators at all levels will be vital to the success of this plan.

**Recommendation #4:** *Course content in both full-time and apprenticeship programs should be reviewed so that learning objectives and competencies that are realistic and achievable can be measured against current industry requirements and standards.*

Current policy requires that a review of the curriculum for every full-time program be undertaken every five years. In actual fact, many programs review and revise course content on an annual basis to keep abreast of advances in technology and to respond to the recommendations of Program Advisory Committees. Unfortunately, course revisions tend to **add** topics to the already burgeoning content, but they do not **delete** anything, nor do they adjust the course hours to accommodate the additional objectives. A critical look at courses with a view to assessing what is actually achievable within a two-year (full time) or an eight-week (apprenticeship) program is essential if realistic learning objectives are to be established and standards of competence achieved.

**Recommendation #5:** *A needs assessment should be conducted among apprenticeship instructors to determine their real and perceived preparation needs that could be addressed by an in-service workshop such as BMI.*

The findings of this study support the conclusion that the BMI workshop in its present format is effective in meeting **some** needs of **some** newly appointed instructors. The instructor group that expressed the least satisfaction with elements of the workshop are from the apprenticeship programs. A needs assessment using both quantitative and qualitative data gathering methods should be undertaken. Information gathered by means of a survey, focus groups, interviews, critical incident analysis, and a review of previous BMI evaluations by

apprenticeship instructors could be analyzed to determine the gaps between pressing needs and the present workshop focus. An examination of the needs could lead to determination of priorities for apprenticeship instructors and incorporation of those into future workshop sessions.

**Recommendation #6**: *The structure and content of the present BMI workshop should be modified to address deficiencies in instructor preparation and to moderate the stress caused by the pace and intensity.*

The current three-week workshop is described as "crammed" with sessions, lectures, activities, and exercises that leave participants stressed out as well as weary and worn out from trying to absorb all that is being presented. Decreasing the content would relieve much of the stress and pressure experienced by workshop participants and improve absorption and retention rates of material actually taught.

Topics such as test-writing and classroom assessment, for example, which are given minimal time and attention in the current workshop should be re-scheduled to more appropriate times during the year when instructors relate more strongly to these components of the instructional role and are therefore more likely to retain and utilize the learning.

**Recommendation #7**: *Faculty development activities such as the BMI workshop should be presented as an on-going pursuit, not just a one-time requirement when instructors begin their teaching career.*

There is no doubt about the fact that the initial BMI workshop performs an essential function by coaching newly appointed instructors in lesson preparation and delivery. When this first professional development experience is over, new instructors may have the mistaken notion

that they are "fully trained" in andragogical techniques because there is no requirement that they attend further sessions. By sequencing seminars, workshops, and lectures on various topics related to adult education, professional development planners at the institute would be establishing among new instructors the mindset that "life-long learning" is expected and accepted.

**Recommendation #8**: *Developmental needs of instructors should be identified as part of a performance assurance system and should be linked with a plan for faculty development.*

Faculty members needing reinforcement or updating of certain modules presented in the BMI workshop should be able to obtain it. A rotational delivery plan for all modules would ensure availability of the training on a continuous basis. Such a plan could also include implementation of recommendations made by the workshop coordinator for improved follow-up to the BMI workshop.

## Recommendations for Further Research

This research has established that the "Becoming a Master Instructor" workshop is perceived by newly appointed instructors as an effective way to prepare them for initial instructional roles. However, the participants in this study expressed definite opinions about components of the workshop that they felt were not particularly useful or relevant. A further study could be done to examine attitudes towards topics such as test-writing, classroom assessment, and teambuilding, if they were presented at different times and by different methods.

Another topic for study would be to research more fully the effect and value that peer

consultation combined with evaluation and feedback could have for improving instructional practice. This could be applied to specific areas of need such as student evaluation and classroom management.

Apprenticeship instructors claim that their instructional circumstances are unique partly because of the design of the program and partly because of the sociological differences, problems, and challenges associated with their student population. Future research could be conducted to examine the attitudes and perceptions of clients of apprenticeship training locally, regionally, or even provincially.

A complete evaluation of the BMI workshop could be undertaken to examine strengths and weaknesses of the instructor preparation endeavour. Such a study would also be useful in providing guidance for long-term professional development planning for the institute.

## Concluding Comments

Overall, the "Becoming a Master Instructor" workshop does a good job of preparing instructors for their initial instructional experience, and instructors perceive that their immediate needs are being met. The workshop is especially effective at providing a process for newly appointed instructors to follow when preparing lessons and presenting them in classroom, lab, or shop settings. Instructors have identified needs for further development of instructional expertise and have expressed confidence that institute training programs and personnel can effectively meet their requirements. A positive attitude towards further and ongoing professional development exists among instructors; however, the learning engaged in must be relevant and have immediate usefulness; it must be accompanied by reinforcement opportunities that allow for mastery; and it must occur amidst the physical safety and mutual acceptance of a small group of peers.

# Bibliography

Abbott, R.W., Wulff, D.W., Nyquist, J.D., Ropp, V.A., and Hess, C.W. (1990) "Satisfaction With Processes of Collecting Student Opinions About Instruction: The Student Perspective" from *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 82 (2). 201-206.

Aleamoni, Lawrence M. (1987) "Typical Faculty Concerns About Student Evaluation of Teaching" from *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*. 31, 25-31.

Bailey, Duncan, & Bennett, Jerome V. (1996)" The Realistic Model of Higher Education" from *Quality Progress*. November. 77-79.

Berliner, D. (1984). "The Half-Full Glass. A Review of Research on Teaching." Chapter 4 in Hosford, P., ed., *Using What We Know About Teaching*. Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Bloom, B. (1984). "The 2-Sigma Problem: The Search for Methods of Group Instruction as Effective as One-to-One Tutoring." *Educational Researcher*. 13, 4-16.

Bryant, Donald W. (1995) "The Battle of Instuctional Effectiveness" from *Community College Journal*. Dec.-Jan., 16-22.

Camp, Robert (1989) *Benchmarking: The Search for Industry Best Practices That Lead to Superior Performance*. Milwaukee, WI: ASQC Quality Press.

Carkhuff, R.R. (1981) *The Skilled Teacher*.Amherst Massachusetts: Human Resource Development Press.

Carkhuff, R. R. and Berenson, D. H. (1978). *The Skills of Teaching: Content Development Skills*. Amherst, Massachusetts: Human Resouce Development Press.

Carkhuff, R. R. and Berenson, D. H. (1978). *The Skills of Teaching: Lesson Planning Skills*. Amherst, Massachusetts: Human Resource Development Press.

Cashin, W.E. (1988) *IDEA Paper no 20: Student ratings of teaching: A Summary of the Research*. Manhattan: Kansas State University, Center for Faculty Evaluation and Development.

Cashin, W.E., and Downey, R.G. (1992) "Using Global Student Rating Items for Summative Evaluation" from *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 84 (4), 563-572.

Cranton, Patricia, (1996). *Professional Development as Transformative Learning. New Perspectives for Teachers of Adults*. Jossey-Bass Publishers. San Francisco.

Crosby, Philip B. (1979) *Quality is Free*. New York: NY. McGraw-Hill Book Co.

Delahaye, Brian L.; Limerick, David C. & Hearn, Greg. (1994) "The Relationship Between Andragogical and Pedagogical Orientations and the Implications for Adult Learning" from *Adult Education Quarterly*, 44, (4). Summer, 187-200.

Deming, W. Edwards (1986) *Out of the Crisis*. Cambridge: MA. Massachussets Institute of Technology.

El-Hassan, Karma (1995) "Students' Ratings of Instruction: Generalizability of Findings" from *Studies in Educational Evaluation*. 21, 411-429.

Feldman, K.A. (1989) "The Association between student ratings of specific instructional dimensions and student achievement: Refining and extending the synthesis of data from multisection validity studies"from *Research in Higher Education*. 30 (6), 583-645.

Fram, Eugene H. And Robert C. Camp (1995) "Finding and Implementing Best Practices in Higher Education from *Quality Progress*. February, 69-73.

Fuller, F.F. and Manning, B.A. (1973). " Self-confrontation reviewed: A conceptualization for video playback in teacher education," from *Review of Educational Research*. 43 (4), 469-528.

Garrison, D. Randy (1994). *Research Perspectives in Adult Education*. Krieger Publishing Company. Malabar, Florida.

Gil, Doron H. (1987) "Instructional Evaluation as a Feedback Process" from *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*. 31, 57-64.

Gilmore, J. (1991) *Price and Quality in Higher Education*. Washington, DC: US Department of Education.

Helms, Susan and Key, Coretta H. (1994) "Are Students More Than customers in the Classroom?" from *Quality Progress*. September, 97-99.

Hopkins, David; Howard, Julie; Johnston, Iain; Glover, Barbara; and Woodburn, Sue (1991) "Teacher Appraisal, Professional Development and School Involvement: a case study" from *School Organisation*. 11 (1), 37-53.

Hubbard, Dean L. (1994) 'Can Higher Education Learn From Factories?" from *Quality Progress*. May, 93-97.

Hudgins, James L. (1996) "Institutional Effectiveness: A Strategy for Institutional

Renewal" from *Celebrations*,an occasional publication of the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD). Austin, Texas.

Isley, Bill. (1995). *A Project Management Approach to Course Development*. Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. Edmonton, Alberta.

Jones, Glen A. & Geis, George L. (1995) "Faculty Development Structures and Activities in Ontario's Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology" from *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education*. 25 (1), 41-61.

Kishor, Nand (1995) "The Effect of Implicit Theories on Raters' Inference in Performance Judgment: Consequences for the Validity of Student Ratings of Instruction" from *Research in Higher Education*. 36 (2), 177-195.

Leigh, David E. (1995) "The 'Walk the Talk' Model: A Classroom Model That Works in Education."from *Quality Progress*. November, 67-70.

Lewis, R.G. and Smith, D.H. (1994) "Total Quality Management in Higher Education" from the *Total Quality In*...Series. Delray Beach, FL. St. Lucie Press.

Long, H.B. (1992). "University Adult Education Research in the United States." *International Journal of University Adult Education*. 31 (3), 66-69.

MacLeod, G.R. (1984) Microteaching Effectiveness" in T. Husen and T.N. Posthewaite (Eds.) *International Encyclopedia of Education*. Osford: Pergamon Press.

Mann, Nancy R. (1987) *The Keys to Excellence*. Los Angeles, CA: Prestwick Books.

Marsh, H.W. (1983) "Multidimensional ratings of teaching effectiveness by students from different academic settings and their relation to student/course /instructor characteristics" from *Journal of Educatioinal Psychology*. 75 (1), 150-166.

Murgatroyd, Stephen (1993) "Implementing Total Quality Management in the School: Challenges and Opportunity" from *School Organisation*. 13 (3), 269-281.

O'Neil, Judy; Foy, Norman; Bailey, Carol & Cuozzo, Peter (1995) "A Best Practices Program Development Model" from *Adult Learning*. November/December, 20-22

Ory, J.C. (1990) "Student Ratings of Instruction: Ethics and Practice" from *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*. 43 Fall, 63-74.

Plecas, D.B., and Sork, T.J. (1986). "Adult Education: Curing the Ills of an Undisciplined Discipline." *Adult Education*. 37 (1), 48-62.

Rosch, T.A., and Reich, J.N. (1996). "The Enculturation of New Faculty in Higher Education" from *Research in Higher Education*. 37 (1), 115-131.

Ryan, Joseph M. & Harrison, Paul D. (1995) "The Relationship Between Individual Instructional Characteristics and the Overall Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness Across Different Instructional Contexts" from *Research in Higher Education*. 36 (5), 577-594.

Schur, Barbara. (1991) "Microteaching: Inservice Education for Adult Educators." Unpublished Master's Thesis. University of Alberta, Edmonton. Alberta.

Sirvanci, Mete (1996) "Are Students the True Customers of Higher Education?" from *Quality Progress*. October, 99-102.

Smith, Edwin R. And Baxter, Beth. (1995). "Community Colleges and Quality" from *Community College Journal*. Dec.-Jan., 37-40.

Spanns, W. (1994) "NAIT Critical Processes." Unpublished manuscript. Department of Research and Academic Development. Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. Edmonton, Alberta.

Stralser, Steven (1995) "Benchmarking: The New Tool" from *Planning for Higher Education*. 23 Summer, 15-19.

Tribus, Myron (1993) "Quality Management in Education" from *Journal for Quality and Participation*. Jan.- Feb., 12-21.

Turner, Ronald E. (1995) "TQM in the College Classroom" from *Quality Progress*. October, 105-108.

Tuttle, Thomas C. (1994) "Is Total Quality Worth the Effort? How Do We Know?" from *New Directions for Higher Education*. 86 Summer, 21-32.

Veenman, S. (1984) "Perceived Problems of Beginning Teachers" from *Review of Educational Research*. 54 (2), 143-179.

Walker, H. Fred. (1995) "Texas Instruments' and Iowa State University's Experience With the University Challenge Program" from *Quality Progress*. July, 103-106.

Wilkinson, Gayle A. (1996) "Enhancing Mircoteaching Through Additional Feedback From Preservice Administrators" from *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 12 (2), 211-221.

Wood, Diane R. (1992) "Teaching Narratives: A Source for Faculty Development and Evaluation" from *Harward Educational Review*. 62 (4) Winter, 535-550.

## APPENDIX 'A'

Permission to conduct research at participating institute

NAIT

# MEMO

Date: June 27, 1997

To: Bill Spaans, Vice-President
Student Services and Community Relations

From: Jeff Donnelly

Re: **Research Proposal: Shirley Carroll**

I have reviewed the attached proposal and by way of this note recommend approval of this study. I believe the proposed evaluation of the "Becoming a Master Instructor" workshop will be beneficial to the Institute.

I have determined that Organizational Development Services are involved and supportive of this effort. Further, I foresee no conflicting organizational efforts.

I recommend the sole condition that the researcher (Shirley Carroll) share her results with Organizational Development Services once her study is complete.

Jeff Donnelly, Coordinator
Institutional Research

JD/jlw

cc: Dave Hoy
Jim Berg

## APPENDIX 'B'

Information and Consent forms—Participants in Research

**interoffice**
MEMORANDUM

**to:** (Instructor Name)
**from:** Shirley A. Carroll
**subject:** "Becoming A Master Instructor" Research
**date:** October 2, 1997

As an instructor within a full-time and/or apprenticeship program at NAIT, your high levels of competence, depth of knowledge, and broad experience in applying your technical skills have met the institute's hiring qualifications.

It is to your advantage to be recognized as an instructor at a technical institute that has an excellent reputation for offering quality career education and training in support of Alberta's economic development; and to ensure that NAIT maintains its reputation, I am requesting your assistance in a project to evaluate the three-week "Becoming a Master Instructor" (BMI) workshop that you participated in when you were hired.

I am seeking the involvement of instructors such as yourself to provide candid, honest opinions about your perceptions of the effectiveness of your BMI workshop training. I appreciate your willingness to be interviewed by me on **(date, time, place).**

I am enclosing two forms for your perusal before the interview. One provides further explanation of the intent of the research and your role as a participant. The other is a consent form which ensures that your rights as a participant will be protected. I will be happy to review these with you before the interview, and I request that you have the signed consent form available when we meet on **(day)**.

Thank you for your assistance with this project.

# 'BMI' WORKSHOP RESEARCH INTERVIEW

The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which new instructors perceive that the three-week "Becoming a Master Instructor" (BMI) workshop provided by NAIT effectively prepares them for their teaching role. To guide the research, the following questions will be addressed:

1. How do instructors perceive their course development abilities? Do they feel competent to develop a course in their specialty area within prescribed guidelines?

2. How do instructors perceive their lesson planning abilities? Do they feel competent to prepare lesson plans that define the major steps, sub-steps, and support knowledge necessary to enable students to reach the instructional objectives of the course?

3. How do instructors perceive their abilities to prepare and deliver an effective presentation following the "ROPES" (Review, Overview, Presentation, Exercise, Summary) method?

4. How do instructors perceive their interpersonal abilities when dealing with students? Do they feel competent to engage in active listening skills and to give and receive constructive feedback and constructive criticism in an instructional setting?

"We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe...We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, intentions...The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective" (Patton, 1980).

"While the interviewer is the expert in asking the questions, the respondent is the expert as far as answers are concerned" (Denzin, 1970).

"He or she (the interviewer) presupposes that the respondent has something to contribute, has had an experience worth talking about, and has an opinion of interest to the researcher" (Patton, 1980).

The interview is the best way - and perhaps the only way - to find out "what is in and on someone else's mind" (Patton, 1980).

# CONSENT FORM - FACULTY PARTICIPANTS

**THESIS TITLE:** **Quality in the Classroom: Becoming a Master Instructor**

**RESEARCHER:** Shirley A. Carroll
University of Alberta
Faculty of Education
Department of Educational Policy Studies

I hereby certify that I agree to participate in the above study. The researcher, a graduate student in the Adult and Higher Education program of the Department of Educational Policy Studies, is also a faculty member at my institution. I understand the following:

1. The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which new instructors perceive that the three-week "Becoming a Master Instructor" (BMI) workshop provided by NAIT effectively prepares them for their first teaching experience. The study will survey faculty perceptions of their abilities to develop courses, prepare lesson plans, present material using "ROPES" and give and receive constructive feedback and constructive criticism.

2. My name will not be used in the resulting thesis.

3. Any information I provide to the researcher will be kept confidential and used solely for the purposes of this research study. No information will be released to a third party unless I request in writing to the researcher that this be done.

4. I am a purely voluntary participant in this research and as such, I realize that I have the right to quit or refuse to participate at any time.

5. The results of this study will be made available to me.

6. The results of this study will be made available to the Organizational Development Services department at NAIT to assist them in continuously improving the BMI workshop.

7. I have been fully informed as to the nature of this study and my involvement in it.

8. The thesis that will be prepared as a result of this study will be available for examination at the University of Alberta Library.

## APPENDIX 'C'

"Becoming a Master Instructor" Interview Guide for Instructors

# "Becoming a Master Instructor"Interview Guide
# For Instructors

---

**Section I - Background/Demographic Information**

Gender: F M

Age: _____

NAIT School of _____

Program _____ Duration _____ weeks

Courses _____ Duration _____ hours

_____ Duration _____ hours

**Professional/Technical Training**:
Journeyman certificate/ticket _____ Trade _____
Diploma _____
Other _____

---

**Section II - Course Development and Delivery Information**

1. One of the major components of the BMI workshop is developing lesson content which includes writing instructional objectives and developing lesson plans. Describe your experience of developing lesson plans for the courses you teach.

2. Can you identify ways in which the BMI workshop prepared you for the lesson planning component of your job?

3. Can you suggest any ways in which the BMI workshop could have better prepared you for this component of your job?

4. Have you been assisted in this aspect of your job by any persons or programs apart from the BMI workshop?

5. Another major component of the BMI workshop is the effective presentation of new material to students in the classroom. (ROPES- Show, Tell, Do) Describe what you consider to be an effective presentation in your educational setting.

6. Describe how the BMI workshop contributed to your understanding of what it takes to be an effective presenter.

7. Describe how the BMI workshop contributed to your actually developing your skills as a presenter.

8. Describe how the BMI workshop contributed to developing your skills in test writing and other methods of measuring student performance.

**Section III - Classroom/Learning Environment**

9. A third major component of the BMI workshop had to do with classroom environment. You participated in role playing and scenarios wherein you practiced active listening, giving and receiving feedback, and relating positively to your adult students. (Acknowledging, attending, door opening, probing) Describe ways in which you interact effectively with your students on an interpersonal basis.

10. Describe how the BMI workshop contributed to your understanding of effective interpersonal skills in an instructional setting.

11. Describe how the BMI workshop contributed to your actually developing your skills as an effective communicator.

**Section IV - General Comments/Observations**

12. What would you say was the most beneficial aspect of the BMI workshop in preparing you for your classroom experience?

13. What did you learn in the BMI workshop that has been most helpful to you in your instructional role?

14. What kind of follow-up to the BMI workshop would be most useful to you in enhancing your effectiveness as an instructor?

15. What recommendations would you make to the BMI workshop organizers to improve it?

## APPENDIX 'D'

"Becoming a Master Instructor" Interview Guide for Administrators
(Program Head)

# "Becoming a Master Instructor"Interview Guide
# For Administrators (Program Head)

---

**Section I - Background/Demographic Information**

Gender: F M

Age: _____

NAIT School of _____

Program _____ Duration _____ weeks

Title: _____

**Professional/Technical Training**:
Journeyman certificate/ticket _____ Trade _____
Diploma _____
Other _____
_____
_____
_____

**Section II - Perceptions and Opinions of the Effectiveness of BMI.**

1. The BMI workshop is designed to prepare new instructors for their first teaching experience. The major components are:

   1) developing instructional objectives,
   2) preparing lesson plans,
   3) delivering the lesson using the ROPES method,
   4) evaluating students (preparing tests, using classroom assessment techniques),
   5) interpersonal/communication skills (active listening, giving and receiving feedback, giving and receiving constructive criticism)
   6) teambuilding.

   Describe the role that these activities play in the job of an instructor in your program.

2. What is your perception of how the BMI workshop prepares a new instructor for these roles?

3. What kind of assistance do you as the Program Head provide for a new instructor?

4. When you are hiring a new instructor, I expect it is safe to say that technical competence is your first consideration. After that, what are the most important characteristics you look for?

5. How significant do you believe the BMI workshop is in helping a new instructor "survive" their first year?

6. What would you say is the most beneficial aspect of the BMI workshop in preparing a new instructor to become a member of the instructional staff in your program?

7.. What do you perceive as the most helpful thing new instructors learn in BMI?

8. What kind of follow-up to the BMI workshop would be most useful to you in enhancing your effectiveness as a program leader?

9. What is your overall impression of what goes on during those three weeks?

10. What recommendations would you make to the BMI workshop organizers to improve it?

## APPENDIX 'E'

"Becoming a Master Instructor" Interview Guide for Workshop Facilitator

# "Becoming a Master Instructor"Interview Guide
# For Workshop Facilitator

**Section I - Background/Demographic Information**

Gender: F M

Age: _____

NAIT School of _____

Program _____ Duration _____ weeks

Title: _____

**Professional/Technical Training**:
Journeyman certificate/ticket _____ Trade _____
Diploma _____
Other _____
_____
_____
_____

**Section II - Perceptions and Opinions of the Effectiveness of BMI.**

1. The BMI workshop is designed to prepare new instructors for their first teaching experience. The major components are:

   1) developing instructional objectives,
   2) preparing lesson plans,
   3) delivering the lesson using the ROPES method,
   4) evaluating students (preparing tests, using classroom assessment techniques),
   5) interpersonal/communication skills (active listening, giving and receiving feedback, giving and receiving constructive criticism)
   6) teambuilding.

   What is your perception of how the BMI workshop meets its objective of preparing new instructors for these roles?

2. What is your perception of how significant the BMI workshop is in helping new instructors "survive" their first year?

3. Some participants in the BMI workshop have actually been teaching at the institute for a semester or even a full year before they take the training. What is your opinion of their performance compared with the newly appointed instructors who have come straight from industry?

4. What is your opinion of the present follow-up to the BMI workshop? What would be more useful?

5. What do you think the perception of BMI is among program leaders across the institute?

6. The test writing and student evaluation components of BMI have been described as weak. What is your opinion about how these topics are currently handled in the workshop?

7. There has been an observation that the make-up of the small groups within BMI might be more beneficial if they were from the same instructional area - for example, put all of the trades instructors together as opposed to having them mixed in with instructors from the technologies and engineering. What is your opinion about that?

8. Instructors from the apprenticeship areas insist that they cannot implement ROPES into their presentations because they have too much material to present in the 8-week course. What is your opinion about that?

9. What recommendations would you make to NAIT administration regarding staff training and development?

10. The teambuilding component of the BMI workshop has been described as contrived and untimely. What is your opinion about that?

## APPENDIX 'F'

"Becoming a Master Instructor" Interview Guide for Workshop Coordinator

# "Becoming a Master Instructor"Interview Guide
# For Workshop Coordinator

**Section I - Background/Demographic Information**

Gender: F M

Age: _____

NAIT School of _____

Program _____ Duration _____ weeks

Title: _____

**Professional/Technical Training**:
Journeyman certificate/ticket _____ Trade _____
Diploma _____
Other _____
_____
_____
_____

**Section II - Perceptions and Opinions of the Effectiveness of BMI.**

1. The BMI workshop is designed to prepare new instructors for their first teaching experience. The major components are:

   1) developing instructional objectives,
   2) preparing lesson plans,
   3) delivering the lesson using the ROPES method,
   4) evaluating students (preparing tests, using classroom assessment techniques),
   5) interpersonal/communication skills (active listening, giving and receiving feedback, giving and receiving constructive criticism)
   6) teambuilding.

   What is your perception of how the BMI workshop meets its objective of preparing new instructors for these roles?

2. What is your perception of how significant the BMI workshop is in helping new instructors "survive" their first year?

3. Some participants in the BMI workshop have actually been teaching at the institute for a semester or even a full year before they take the training. What is your opinion of their performance compared with the newly appointed instructors who have come straight from industry?

4. What is your opinion of the present follow-up to the BMI workshop? What would be more useful?

5. What do you think the perception of BMI is among program leaders across the institute?

6. The test writing and student evaluation components of BMI have been described as weak. What is your opinion about how these topics are currently handled in the workshop?

7. There has been an observation that the make-up of the small groups within BMI might be more beneficial if they were from the same instructional area - for example, put all of the trades instructors together as opposed to having them mixed in with instructors from the technologies and engineering. What is your opinion about that?

8. What recommendations would you make to NAIT administration regarding staff training and development?